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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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Delegates Begin To Arrive for Amman Summit

JN2710071295 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0500 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Delegates to the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit started to arrive in Amman early this morning. The delegations include senior economic and well-known industrial and business people.

The Yemeni deputy prime and minister of planning told JORDAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA, that this summit has a great role in boosting Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process. He expressed Yemen's support for the summit as well as Jordan's efforts in this field. The Yemeni official said that his country would furnish the summit with various projects, including the establishment of a free zone in Aden.

The Yemeni deputy prime minister was received at Queen Alia's International Airport by Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Information Dr. Khalid al-Karaki.

Also New Zealand's ambassador to Turkey has arrived in Amman to lead his country's delegation to the summit. He said his country's participation in the summit stems from its real interest in the follow-up of development efforts in the region. He said his country believes that maximum interest should be given to the economic development in the region.

Inter-Arab Affairs

PA Calls For Summit To Discuss U.S. Embassy Move

JN2610194595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1232 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Interview with Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PA minister of culture and information, in Gaza, by radio correspondent Yusuf al-Qazzaz, in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [al-Qazzaz] Mr. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, in your capacity as a minister in the Palestinian National Authority [PNA; Palestinian Authority, PA], and as a negotiator, you are aware that the issue of Jerusalem comes at the top of the agenda of the final stage. The U.S. Congress made its decision in advance ....

['Abd-Rabbuh, interrupting] It did not make this decision in advance, it interfered in something which is not of its concern. It has nothing to do with this issue. In the U.S. Congress, there are groups which are only concerned about narrow domestic interests, and sometimes they are only concerned about their narrow personal interests. These institutions have always tried to pay from others' pockets, and the easiest thing for them is to pay from our own pocket. Many people visited Washington which is the great capital of a superpower and which is named after a great leader. However, instead of showing concern about Jerusalem and the capitals of others they must be concerned about their own capital around which there are pockets of poverty that do not befit the capital of a superpower. Most of its citizens are black Americans from Africa, who are suffering from deteriorating conditions.

I believe that the U.S. Congress should be advised to care about its own capital so that it will fit its position, instead of talking about others' capitals and about building their embassy in this or that place. Despite this, I believe that this is a very serious sign and there is a need for Arab summit now. There were calls for a Arab summit because of some settlement activities. What we see now is a decision made by a U.S. institution to settle in an entire city which has an Arab, Islamic, and Christian heritage, in a Palestinian city. Thus, I believe it is necessary to call for an Arab summit now more than before. Those people are not concerned about anything and they respect nothing. The peace process means nothing at all to them. They are only concerned about their own narrow interests and views. Also, Israeli politicians began to praise and welcome what happened. This, in fact, is a disavowal of all that was agreed on.

Furthermore, I want here to note that the settlement and expansion activities, as well as what are called circuit roads, which are taking place in the name of the peace process, conflict with peace and with the peace process. I believe that we should adopt a firm stand vis-a-vis all this and that celebrations here and there and some steps here and there must not prevent us from seeing the big picture.

[Al-Qazzaz] Yes, in fact the Israelis would believe that they have made an achievement through the Congress, but this will empty peace of its essence; namely, the city of Jerusalem.

Let us go back to a cultural issue. In your capacity as minister of culture and as an educated person, you know that music is an international language. President Yasir 'Arafat went to listen to music. It seems, however, that the Congress extends to the New York Municipality. The president was invited by the UN secretary general. So, why did the New York mayor interfere?

['Abd-Rabbuh] There are some people who are more royal than king. They try, for narrow purposes and personal interests, to show more concern about the Israeli interests than the Israelis themselves. This is a real comedy in the history of humanity at this stage. They place themselves above all people, above mankind, and above

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people's interests and rights. Therefore, they are expected to continue with this. If no clear Arab and Islamic stand is taken ... [pauses] I believe that the call for an Arab and Islamic summit on Jerusalem has become necessary to adopt a unified stand. I do not believe the United States can continue to claim that it sponsors the peace process. We signed an agreement on the second transitional stage a few weeks ago in Washington. Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress in an absolutely irresponsible and arrogant way interfered in a matter that does not concern them at all.

[Al-Qazzaz] Mr. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, minister of culture and information. Thank you.

['Abd-Rabbuh] Thank you.

League Chief Rules Out Arab Summit

NC2610212195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1715 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Oct (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has ruled out holding an Arab summit conference to discuss the U.S. Congress decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

In a press statement today, he said a summit is not a proposed option, but an extraordinary session of the Arab League Council is possible. The session could propose an Arab move in response to the U.S. decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem by 1999. He said he is in constant touch and consultation with Yasir 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian National Authority, and several Arab foreign ministers to coordinate stands on this issue. He added that this matter will be the subject of his sideline meetings of the Amman economic summit.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Adviser Kanafani on U.S. Embassy Decision

JN2610184795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1215 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Telephone interview with Marwan Kanafani, Yasir 'Arafat's adviser and official spokesman, in Gaza, by Yusuf al-Qazzaz, in the studio, on 26 October — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [al-Qazzaz] Brother Marwan Kanafani, let us discuss the issue related to the relocation of the U.S. Embassy and the effect this will have on the peace process?

[Kanafani] We are now used to the fact that every four years, the candidates for both the local and legislative councils in the United States compete to appease Israel and the U.S. Jews, and particularly the Likud Party. This issue does not bother us because it is now a well-known fact to the world and to everyone, particularly to our Palestinian masses. However, this time, I believe that the insistence by the U.S. Congress — despite all these differences in positions between the Democrats and the Republicans — to agree on a formula, and to pass it in the Senate and the House of Representatives, means an attempt to achieve one of two things; either to sabotage the peace process, because the enemies of peace are not only present in Israel, but also in the United States, and regrettably in the U.S. Congress and the House of Representatives....

[Al-Qazzaz, interrupting] In fact, brother Marwan Kanafani, they are supporters of the Likud?

[Kanafani] Of course, and I call them the enemies of peace. There are enemies of peace among the Israeli public, inside the Israeli Army, and inside the Jewish community in the United States. Also, unfortunately there are enemies of peace — as revealed lately — inside the U.S. legislative councils, particularly in the Senate and the House of Representatives. At any rate, frankly, this decision is, from a practical viewpoint, symbolic and does not bind the U.S. president to make any decision. The president yesterday issued a statement saying that he will not abide by, or implement that decision. As regards....

[Al-Qazzaz, interrupting] Yes....

[Kanafani] I am sorry. Let me finish please. As regards those who have approved that decision — 95 out of 100 Congressmen — this is a symbolic measure. They wish to prove to the Jews and to the press there that they have made a decision in this regard. However, let me say what the Palestinian National Authority thinks about this decision. First, this decision will not change anything on the ground. We know the facts. We know where we stand. We are not hiding this from anyone and we are not cheating anybody. We say that, as far as we are concerned, Jerusalem constitutes a red line and a very delicate issue which no one can joke about. Our demand in this regard is very clear; that it must be the capital of an independent Palestinian state.

[Al-Qazzaz] Brother Marwan Kanafani, the president's adviser and spokesman, there was some satisfaction among the audience at Harvard University — and you know how important is Harvard University — when President Yasir 'Arafat convinced them that Jerusalem can become the capital of two states, as is the case with Rome and the Vatican?

[Kanafani] It is not our job to convince people, although you know the president — he likes to convince people through logic. But what I wish to say is that as far as we

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are concerned, the Jerusalem issue cannot be subject to any extortion, either by the New York mayor, the U.S. Congress, or anybody else. This is a red line which concerns no one, but us.

Secondly, we believe that this decision is directed against the peace process, as is the case with certain other decisions, as is the case with the masked men who are shown on the Israeli television to say that they will murder Palestinians and Jews in order to stop the peace process, and as is the case with all the other attempts by the enemies of peace to stop the peace process.

Thirdly, this decision contravenes all — and I emphasize all — decisions in this regard. It contravenes, first, the U.S. decisions; second, the letters of assurances we were given by U.S. officials and by U.S. presidents and secretaries of state; third, the international agreements, the UN resolutions, and the human and international norms; and fourth, the peace agreement we signed with the Israelis.

In fact, I do not attach much importance to this decision. However, I believe that we must oppose even this symbolic measure with all the strength we have.

[Al-Qazzaz] How do you assess the president's meetings with representative of the Jewish community in the United States?

[Kanafani] The president spent more than six hours during his visit to the United States talking to the Jewish communities and U.S. Jewish societies — including the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations and the coordinating committee of the Jewish national organizations in the United States, as well as other figures. It is clear that there were people who gave these institutions and organizations written questions, positions, and allegations, and nonsense arguments, such as the argument that when he speaks to the Palestinian people, President 'Arafat speaks about Jerusalem, about continuing the struggle, and about sacrifices. This was not denied by the president because the building of the state, the society, and the institutions requires such activity.

The other point concerns the PLO National Charter and questions as to when will you erase this or that. The president was very clear in this regard. He said not a single word or paragraph in the PLO National Charter will be erased. There may be new decisions taken by the Palestine National Council which may be added to this Charter and the other documents, but not a single word or letter will be erased from the Charter. I was really impressed by the president's competence and good knowledge of U.S. affairs when he gave them the example of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Constitution still includes things that were written in 1776, but other amendments were introduced to this Constitution to make in harmony with the spirit of the age. This example was very convincing to the audience. Why do you ask us to do what you have not done in your country.

The other point concerned the activities of some Palestinian organizations. You know that the president has clear answers to such questions.

The president's meetings with the Jewish societies and with the U.S. societies in general were fruitful and clear. He did not cheat them or say anything which he does not sincerely believe in. You asked me about his meeting at Harvard. His answers were very clear when this issue [of the PLO Charter] was raised. He told the audience: From the very first beginning, I want to tell you that I cannot, I do not have the authority to, and I do not intend to erase a single letter from the PLO National Charter.

[Al-Qazzaz] Brother Marwan, they say here that Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] went to listen to music, but the New York mayor fabricated a crisis and turned this musical concert into a political issue. We, and you, know very well that President Yasir 'Arafat had a very busy agenda. How do you explain this crisis? In fact, the New York mayor appeared to be — and allow me to say so — backward.

[Kanafani] Of course. Brother Yusuf, let me tell you what happened. The president had some 60 appointments scheduled for the three days we spent there. These included social and cultural events which he would attend as a courtesy. You know that the president is serious and pays attention to serious issues. These appointments included this musical concert which was held at Rockefeller [as heard] Center. The president received an invitation from UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali to attend that concert, just like all the other heads of states. If the president had received the invitation from the New York mayor he would have thrown it in the dustbin, because we know that that man is a servant to all the interests that are against the Arabs, Islam, the Palestinians, and peace.

If this invitation — and I wish I could say that in English; in fact I did say that in New York — came from New York Mayor Giuliani, we would have thrown it in the dustbin because we do not care about this man at all. We know that he is just like his predecessors — a servant to the interests of these people. I wish to say that this is not the first time that a New York mayor drops to such a low human and ethical level. Former New York mayors have done the same thing with late King Faysal [of Saudi Arabia], with late Jamal-'Abd-al-Nasir, with

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Sukarno, with Castro, and with Pompidou. All these respectful heads of states who had a great impact in human history, were treated by the mercenaries who were mayors of New York in such a manner. For your information, let me say something. The president did not care about or pay any attention to this incident. An official from the New York council spoke to one of the president's aides. Next morning, the president received telephone calls from officials to apologize....

[Al-Qazzaz, interrupting] The position of the U.S. Government...

[Kanafani] Of course, I do not wish to tell you who had apologized, because you know we do not discuss private things in public. [passage omitted]

Ahmad Quray' 'Annoyed' at U.S. Embassy Decision

NC2710082995 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 27 Oct 95

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', PA minister of economy and trade, in Jerusalem, by Fayiz al-Miliji, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Miliji] First, we welcome Mr. Ahmad Quray' as our guest on Voice of the Arabs.

[Quray'] Thank you very much. [passage omitted]

[Al-Miliji] Mr. Ahmad Quray', minister of economy and trade in the Palestinian Authority [PA], the whole world is currently following the U.S. Congress' unilateral decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. As you know, this issue is sensitive. Negotiations over Jerusalem have been postponed until the final stage of negotiations between you and the Israelis. How do you take this decision and what measures have you taken?

[Quray'] There is no doubt that this was the worst decision that could the United States could make, considering its capacity as a superpower, as the most powerful country in this world, and in view of its role as one of the cosponsors of the peace process. The U.S. Congress has shown its total bias and that it is governed by electoral tactics and subject to pressures from the Zionist lobby in the United States. I believe that this does not serve the peace process at all. On the contrary, such a decision endangers the peace process and ruins the credibility of the United States instead of promoting it as a cosponsor of this peace process. If the U.S. Administration does not take a firm stance against this resolution, halt it, vote against it, and veto it, it will destroy the peace process completely.

We were annoyed and surprised at this resolution. There was extraordinary disappointment regarding this decision. We still hope that the United States will change its mind or that the U.S. president will use the veto against it.

That is one thing. On the other hand, we, as an Arab and Islamic nation, are being challenged to prove to the whole world that Jerusalem is a Palestinian city, that Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine, and that the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem are the rightful heritage of the Palestinians, Muslims, and Arabs. Therefore, one should not abuse or tamper with them. That is the basic issue; and it is undoubtedly a volatile matter.

The agreement we signed says that the Jerusalem issue is one of the things to be discussed during the final stage negotiations. There is still some time before the final-stage negotiations, six or seven months. On 4 or 5 May, we will start discussing the Jerusalem issue and will present the whole issue for discussion. Our stance on this matter is known.

Therefore, anticipating events before due course and attempting to create a status quo ante either practically or politically will only harm the peace process.

[Al-Miliji] Have you not discussed this matter with the U.S. Administration?

[Quray'] Actually, so far the U.S. Administration claims that it is opposed to this move. It has not approved of the resolution. However, we fear the process of postponing and stalling on the matter. We fear that this will constitute a sword of Damocles; that it will be delayed for six months and then reviewed, and then another three months and then reviewed again. We are in contact with them and are waiting to see what they will do. However, this is a disappointing decision by those who are supposed to represent the American people.

[Al-Miliji] President Yasir 'Arafat was in New York when this crisis over Jerusalem was precipitated by the U.S. Congressional resolution. Did President 'Arafat not hold contacts there?

[Quray'] He undoubtedly held contacts with the U.S. Administration. He also had contacts and extended talks with President Husni Mubarak. He is in contact with all his Arab brothers. This is an issue one cannot remain quiet about or sleep on. Stances must be worked out very quickly because events are moving very quickly. As you said at the beginning of this interview, events are moving very fast. One event overtakes another. Therefore, we cannot allow this incident to be eclipsed by any other one, no matter what. [passage omitted]

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Al-Husayni Comments on Jerusalem, Other Issues

MM2610171395 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 26 Oct 95 p 7

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, Palestinian Authority official in charge of the Jerusalem file, by Ruba al-Husari; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Husari] What are the implications of the Senate's vote on the resolution to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem?

[Al-Husayni] This depends on the U.S. Administration's stance with regard to this decision. If the U.S. Administration decides not to implement the Senate's decision until we and the Israelis reach an agreement, the future of this decision would be linked to the nature of this agreement and therefore the harm caused by this decision will be moral rather than material. But if the U.S. Administration acts on this decision, it would mean that the whole political [peace] process is on extremely dangerous ground, and with the United States losing credibility, there is also the loss of the credibility of the peace process.

[Al-Husari] Can President Bill Clinton or the present U.S. Administration oppose this decision?

[Al-Husayni] They cannot, because the Senate voted with a majority of nearly 94 percent. This means that the President cannot use the veto but can delay implementation if he thinks that it may harm U.S. interests. I believe that this would harm the interests of the United States and its credibility with regard to the peace process, and therefore we expect him to follow this route.

[Al-Husari] Even if Clinton is preparing for an electoral battle in which he would need the votes of U.S. Jews?

[Al-Husayni] Even so. Previous presidents have entered electoral battles and, at the same time, adopted clear positions against Israeli moves, which was what President (Dwight) Eisenhower did at one point.

[Al-Husari] This phase in U.S.-Israeli relations and U.S. relations with the Middle East differs from that phase.

[Al-Husayni] It may be different, but the United States cannot, within the context of U.S. policy, its current role as a world leader, and its part in the political process, risk all these things in order to implement policies brought about by internal pressures.

[Al-Husari] In your view, what is the purpose of postponing the implementation of the decision until 1999?

[Al-Husayni] First, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations would have been going on for a period of five years in 1998, that is to say three years from now, with the possibility of reaching an agreement over Jerusalem. Either this agreement would be compatible with the U.S. decision — in which case they would have to set up an additional embassy in East Jerusalem — or it would be different, and that would require the United States to change its policy in view of the fact that we had reached an agreement; consequently, this decision would be meaningless if it was not compatible with our agreement with the Israelis.

[Al-Husari] Would this decision not affect future negotiations on Jerusalem, since it has preceded them?

[Al-Husayni] We are dealing with the U.S. Administration and not with the Congress. If the U.S. Administration adopts the same position as the Congress, then we will have a problem with the U.S. Administration. But if the administration adheres to its publicized stance, namely that it will not change its basic position that the Jerusalem issue is a sensitive issue and should not be tampered with now, there will be no effect on future negotiations, except for the moral aspect. In effect, if the U.S. Administration refuses to comply with this decision, it will not strengthen the Israelis' position.

[Al-Husari] What is the point of making such a decision, even for those who sponsored it, if the U.S. Administration does not comply with it?

[Al-Husayni] I believe that the elements who are exerting pressure within the United States are basically not concerned about the peace process and are closer to the Likud than to any other tendency. By doing this, they are trying to play their internal political game.

[Al-Husari] The vote's result, however, shows that these elements have some clout, which is not insignificant.

[Al-Husayni] That is true. They have undoubtedly managed to achieve such a result, in the context of the present Congress. The nature of the present Congress differs from the previous one, which would have found it difficult to take such a decision.

[Al-Husari] This proposal was put forward in May 1995. In your opinion, did the Palestinians prepare enough for this vote?

[Al-Husayni] I believe that we did what we could, taking into account our resources and capabilities. The issue depends entirely on the congressmen's internal interests and on a specific configuration currently in place, which would have been difficult to change. Palestinian pressure groups in the United States have worked hard and held several meetings with some congressmen, but it was clear, even while we were doing it, that the issue was

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not about convictions but about a decision that had been made already.

[Al-Husari] What is the legal situation regarding the plot of land in Jerusalem on which the U.S. Embassy is supposed to be built?

[Al-Husayni] This land is a waqf [religious endowment] land and its status should not be changed. However, during the period of the British mandate it was decided, unofficially, to change it to private property. Also, its owners are refusing to sell it to the U.S. Embassy and therefore to build an embassy on it there must be a decision to confiscate it. Such a decision would be contested by the landowners, among them U.S. nationals. Obviously, if such a decision is taken, it would cause embarrassment to the U.S. Administration.

[Al-Husari] You have recently had contacts with the Vatican representative in Jerusalem, in preparation for the Congress' decision to transfer the embassy. What is the Vatican's position?

[Al-Husayni] The Vatican's position is firm. To prove it, they have insisted on having their embassy in Tel Aviv and not Jerusalem. Incidentally, not only the Vatican but most other churches, including some in the United States, have issued resolutions supporting the Palestinian position. Naturally, the Vatican's influence is not to be taken lightly, even if thus far it has not started to play its role as expected. And yet I believe that if needed, it would have an influence that should not be taken lightly.

[Al-Husari] There are rumors about several projects currently being considered with regard to the future of Jerusalem, including an Israeli project recently revealed, prepared by Chaim Hirschfeld and Ron Bondick, who participated in the secret negotiations in Oslo. Does the Palestinian leadership attach any importance to these projects?

[Al-Husayni] There are many projects which we have heard about or read about in the newspapers, including the Hirschfeld-Bondick proposal. However, to date, there have been no negotiations on this issue. They are all still projects, ideas, and proposals, mostly from the Israeli side, and their primary function may be to break the taboos, especially on the Israeli side, with regard to putting forward the issue of Jerusalem. Some have been conveyed to the Palestinian side to gauge reaction. Until now, the Palestinian policy is to wait until the start of official negotiations on Jerusalem.

[Al-Husari] In your opinion, could any of these issues be taken seriously?

[Al-Husayni] I believe that many of these projects will play a serious part. They need not necessarily be the same ones that will be put on the table. Their role is in breaking taboos with the Israelis, which, in itself, is very important.

[Al-Husari] A common element between most proposals made thus far is the fact that they differentiate between old Jerusalem, in view of its religious significance, and the other part of East Jerusalem, outside the walls. Would this tendency facilitate finding a solution to the Jerusalem issue?

[Al-Husayni] The Palestinian position is that all areas occupied in 1967 must be returned to Palestinian sovereignty. Then, any subsequent redrawing of the border must take place with the approval of both sides.

[Al-Husari] Some time ago, you personally raised the issue of compensation for Arab property in West Jerusalem, then refrained from bringing it up again. Why was this issue brought up and then abandoned?

[Al-Husayni] We brought up the demand for properties and not for compensation. This was raised at the time when the Israelis started to mention Jewish properties in East Jerusalem with a view to reclaiming them and expelling the Arabs from them under the pretext that Jews had lived there more than 50 years ago. Our response was that if this is what you want, then we too demand the return of our possessions in the western area where we own more than 70 percent. Therefore this was just a message to them that this approach would not succeed and that if they insist, we will open the Jerusalem file now and raise the issue of Palestinian rights in West Jerusalem which are no less than alleged Jewish rights in East Jerusalem. When the Israelis again demand the return of Jewish properties in East Jerusalem, we too will officially demand that Palestinian rights be restored in West Jerusalem. However, thus far, we are abiding by the agreement concluded which says that the Jerusalem file will not be opened until the start of negotiations for the final phase.

[Al-Husari] Do you think that there is a contradiction in the fact that interest is focused these days on the celebrations of the United Nations' 50th anniversary, when at the same time resolutions of that authority, including those on Jerusalem, are being violated?

[Al-Husayni] After World War I a system fell and another was established which was called the League of Nations. After World War II the League of Nations collapsed and the United Nations was set up. Now, after the end of the Cold War, the elements of the old system should have disappeared with it, including the United Nations. What we are witnessing now is an attempt

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at universalizing the United Nations. But the United Nations that we know now is not the same as the one we knew before the Cold War. The 50th anniversary celebrations could be the farewell party and not the celebrations of a new start. The United Nations with all its formations today is not a group of united nations, in effect it is the United States.

[Al-Husari] Do you think that Arab reaction to what is happening in Jerusalem is commensurate with the events?

[Al-Husayni] No, absolutely not. Likewise, what is happening in the multilateral negotiations is not commensurate with the events. Even what is happening in the context of inter-Arab relations. Arab states should assume their responsibilities with regard to Jerusalem, and this has not happened until now. For example, the changes that Israel is making in and around Jerusalem have prompted a serious Arab position only once and temporarily, when Israel announced that it was confiscating land. However, the moment that Israel announced that it had frozen this decision, the summit conference was canceled and the solution accepted, and the reaction after that was as though the matter was closed and the problem solved. Regrettably, the differentiation between peace negotiations and the setting up of a peace process is not as it should be. They do not look at it from the perspective that the current negotiations with the Palestinians are an interim phase, but as though peace has been reached between Israel and the Palestinians and therefore, in this context, we see a rush toward normalization even before the real problems are solved.

[Al-Husari] The current [Israeli] Labor government has tried to stop the work of some Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem because of pressures from the right. Would the coming to power of Likud necessarily undermine the future of these institutions?

[Al-Husayni] Not necessarily. The current political process is not the work of Israelis or Palestinians and was not the result of the wishes of the right or the left on either side. International interests dictate the continuation of this process. Consequently, even if Likud came to power, it would, because of specific pressures, be forced to continue the process. Some think that if Likud decides under these pressures to take specific steps, it will gain the approval of the Labor Party and consequently we will see a form of national consensus in Israel which will facilitate the peace process. Some people think that if the Labor Party wants to wage war, Likud would support it, and hence there will be a national consensus in Israel regarding this too. According to some people, this means that it would be easier for Likud to implement a peace process and easier for Labor to start a war. Matters in Jerusalem are not less complicated during a Labor Party period either on a municipal or government scale. For us, the fact that the Labor Party continues with its current policy of confiscating land and setting up new settlements, means that it is not much different from Likud and therefore this issue would not have much effect.

Envoy Calls U.S. Decision 'Flagrant Assault'

NC2610214895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2018 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Oct (MENA)—Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Palestinian ambassador to Cairo, has warned against moving the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

In a statement this evening, al-Qidrah declared that the U.S. Congress decision does not serve the U.S.-sponsored peace process and is a flagrant assault on Arab and Muslim rights.

The Palestinian ambassador added that the decision is part of a political ploy to win Jewish votes in the next U.S. presidential election. He said implementing the decision will pave the way for a broad confrontation between Israel and the Arab countries as well as Islamic countries worldwide.

Al-Qidrah responded to a remark made in Washington by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin that Jerusalem will remain Israel's capital for ever and that Israel will never abandon it. He said that such a remark is full of clear violations of the Palestinian- Israeli Declaration of Principles [DOP], which was signed in Oslo and Washington. He explained that this agreement postponed the negotiations over Jerusalem until the third year after the signing of the DOP, meaning that talks over the Jerusalem issue must begin on 4 May 1996, the beginning of the third year.

Al-Qidrah said that remarks like the one made by Rabin should not be made by people at the top of the Israeli political hierarchy especially as they give Jewish settlers a green light to continue their barbarous actions.

Concerning the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails, al-Qidrah said that the release of these detainees must be carried out without discrimination between one prisoner and another. Noting that the Israelis use the pretext that some women Palestinian prisoners have killed Israelis and therefore must not be released, al-Qidrah asked: How can this happen when there are thousands of Israelis who have Palestinian blood on their hands?

He stressed that no discrimination should be made between Palestinian and Israeli blood.

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The Palestinian ambassador affirmed that the peace process cannot be made credible except through a faithful and meticulous implementation of every phase of the peace agreement and on schedule, particularly as the opponents of the peace process are still threatening to derail it.

Islamic Group Leader Blasts U.S. Embassy Bill

NC2710103595 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Husayn al-Musawi, official in charge of the Islamic Amal Movement, has said that the attempt to give the Zionist movement the upper hand in Jerusalem complements the efforts made by the United States to give the upper hand to the Israeli military machine. He noted that the mujahidin has dealt heavy blows to this machine.

Al-Musawi said the constant Zionist danger to Christian and Islamic sanctities has been revived by the plan to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. He noted that the United States has shown that Washington is the political, military, and financial capital of Israel. He pointed out that the United States, which is being eaten from within, is relying on Israel, whose soldiers are fleeing the blows of the Resistance men. He warned that verbal reaction would (?dilute) the situation, stressing that it is required to continue field action as a response to the Zionist decision. He described the decision by Congress as bad and that it was passed by an administration whose law is terrorism. He said: The U.S. Administration is trying to kidnap Jerusalem from us but it will not succeed. It cannot abolish our religious and fateful link to Jerusalem, which is held holy by God in the bible and the Koran. Our jihad to liberate Jerusalem is holy, he concluded.

Israeli Arabs Call U.S. Embassy Decision 'Very Bad'

JN2610173595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat has described as serious the recent U.S. Congress decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

In another development, President 'Arafat received a popular delegation representing the Green Line Palestinians [Israeli Arabs] at the Presidency in Gaza this afternoon. He expressed hope that the future meetings will be held in Jerusalem, the capital of the Palestinian state. He lauded the steadfastness of our Palestinian kinsfolk inside the Green Line.

On his part, Talab al-Sani', representative of the Arab Democratic Party and member of the Israeli Knesset, stressed his support for the National Authority and President 'Arafat.

Al-Sani', who led the delegation of the Green Line Palestinians, said that the U.S. Congress decision is very bad.

U.S. Decision Prompts 'Redefinition' of Peace Process

MM2610191395 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Oct 95 p 9

[Unattributed article: "Jerusalem Not for Bargaining"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Congress has voted to transfer the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem in a direct challenge to the wish of the White House and the U.S. State Department.

This is the crude message for the wise political analyst trying to weigh the expected pros and cons of an operation of this type and coming at such a time.

The vote of both houses of the U.S. Congress, by overwhelming majorities, to transfer the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem despite the declared opposition of the Administration and State Department, reveals many bitter realities which some people have hesitated to address openly, either because they believe that good will would be lost by the greatest power in the world or because they fear the consequences of enlisting the help of extremist elements — mistakenly believed to be in the minority — which do not attach any importance to genuinely friendly relations with anyone outside the circle of narrow interests...and only narrow interests.

Why did the Congress insist on such a blatant and arrogant challenge to the stance of the White House and the State Department, which are both trying to preserve the credibility of the "mediator" role in one of the most serious international crises?

Where is the urgent need that would justify rushing into such a step while the U.S. negotiators are intent on building trust in the Middle East region, which is an extremely sensitive process in view of the legacy of the bloody past?

Two sides bear the basic responsibility for encouraging this tragic step.

The first side is the U.S. political system, which has strayed very far from the spirit of the democratic process which it preaches and tries to impose everywhere. The developments of the current presidential election campaign with all its contradictions, fumblings, and

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unusual selfishness, in addition to the serious threats of racial enmity and closed castes, indicate that the U.S. voter's despair that the electoral system, that is to say the political system, is incapable of expressing its declared ideals, is well founded.

The other side is the Zionist lobby in the United States, which has orchestrated and nurtured this step. Today, this lobby puts itself before the judgment of history in the United States and also in Israel, where the Zionist entity is being subjected to antagonistic winds at a crucial point in its life and that of its neighbors.

The fact remains that Jerusalem is an issue concerning religious, historical, and cultural rights greater than any political bargaining, too serious to become bargaining counters, and a thousand times more precious than bargaining to rearrange the disproportionate roles in a region looking to escape conflagration.

With all due respect to U.S. parliamentary legitimacy, the vote to transfer the U.S. Embassy is an act which brings in its wake much hostility and scorn and therefore imposes a redefinition of the peace process as a whole.

Editorial: U.S. Vote on Embassy 'Serious Development'

TA2610183995 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Oct 95 p 13

[Editorial: "The Dimensions of the Senate Resolution"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Senate passed a draft law stipulating that "Jerusalem is an undivided city and should be recognized as the capital of Israel. The U.S. Embassy must be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem by 31 May 1999." This is the date of the end of the interim stage as specified in the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreements.

This step is an extremely significant and serious development, especially as the legislation was supported by 93 senators and only five senators voted against it, while two abstained. In other words, an overwhelming majority. This means that the House of Representatives will very likely pass this bill with a large majority as well.

The bill, which was proposed by Republican Senate majority leader Robert Dole, represents an unofficial announcement of the start of the U.S. presidential campaign. Dole wishes to win his party's nomination in order to face Democratic President Clinton. Such a situation undermines the U.S. President and weakens his ability to exercise his right to veto the law, especially if this step passes quietly in Arab and Islamic capitals.

A logical interpretation of this step is that it crosses the red lines which Washington has always observed, despite its pro-Israel bias, and violates international resolutions and the international community's stance in general. The step alleges that East Jerusalem is not occupied territory. This is in contravention of international legitimacy, which has affirmed that Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories.

Moreover, the Senate is trying to determine the final shape of a settlement regarding Jerusalem by claiming that it is an undivided city and the capital of Israel, whereas the peace agreements stipulate that Jerusalem is subject to negotiations until such time as the two sides reach agreement on its final status.

The Senate's step also sets a grave precedent in international relations in that the legislative power of one country is attempting to determine the capital of another country in an extremely sensitive region which has been a hotbed of conflict for many decades. It is as if the U.S. legislative branch is trying to revive — although in another form — the policy of Balfour, who promised what he did not own to those who were not entitled.

Since the Senate's approval came while the United Nations was celebrating its 50th anniversary and most Arab and Muslim leaders were in the United States, this step affirms the Senate's disdain for international resolutions issued by the United Nations. It also affirms the Senate's disregard for the reaction of these leaders, who will presumably raise their voices against this step.

This being the case, it is as useless to talk about the credibility or lack of credibility of U.S. policy as much as it is essential to talk about the activity of the opponents and the power of their opposition to this step.

Editorial: No Peace, Stability Without Jerusalem

JN2710090695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0615 GMT 27 Oct 95

[Station commentary by Yusuf al-Qazzaz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Once again, we say it loudly: There will be no peace without Jerusalem. When President Yasir 'Arafat spoke in the United States at Harvard University about Jerusalem, history recorded for the Palestinian people, Arabs, Muslims, and Christians that the Palestinian leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] had worked out a magical solution for the Jerusalem issue. President 'Arafat said: Jerusalem is a capital for two states, one of them being the Palestinian state. Abu-'Ammar added: Why should the status of Jerusalem not be like that of Rome — the capital of Italy, which includes a full state, that is, the Vatican?

Will the Israelis, Rabin's government in particular, regain their senses which the U.S. Congress members

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tried to make them lose by their approval of transferring their country's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem? Will the Israelis regain their senses, listen to the Palestinian voice of reason, and then settle the question of Jerusalem as proposed by President Yasir 'Arafat at Harvard University?

Jerusalem is the essence of peace. There can be no peace without Jerusalem even if Israel withdraws from all the Palestinian territories. There has been a worldwide condemnation of the U.S. Congress decision. There is a Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian consensus on condemning the Congress decision. We do not want to hear from the West the phrase: The Arabs and Muslims will forget. So, why should we move?

As Palestinians, we proposed a fair and objective solution to the question of Jerusalem. What will the Israelis do? True, the American president promised not to implement the decision, but no one should rely on this promise alone.

The question of Jerusalem is a Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian responsibility. We say it again, Jerusalem will not be Andalusia and Jerusalem will not be a lost paradise. It is an occupied Palestinian city; it is the Palestinians' occupied capital. Jerusalem is for all Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and Christians. Jerusalem is the soul of Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and Christians. Without this soul there can be no life. Without Jerusalem, there will be no peace or stability.

The Israelis might confiscate all of Jerusalem's land, they might reoccupy it every day, they might demolish its mosque, Dome of the Rock, churches, tombs, and quarters. However, every Jerusalemite, Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and Christian would be accursed by God, history, and the coming generations if he relinquished Jerusalem. For, whoever relinquishes Jerusalem, the holy places, the houses of God, the seven gates, history, will relinquish all the holy places on this land.

Jerusalem is peace, it is the equation of peace. This is how it was and this how it will continue to be.

'Top Secret' PLO Letters on Jerusalem Revealed

TA2610165595 (Internet) IRIS News Update in English 25 Oct 95

["Text of the secret internal PLO letters concerning the purchase of land in Jerusalem and support for various organizations within Israel"; translations "were made available by Dr. Aaron Lerner," of Independent Media Review and Analysis]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The following are English translations of two top secret letters from Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, Minister of Finance of the Palestinian National Authority, to PECDAR regarding the payment of money to purchase real estate in Jerusalem and to support various organizations within Israel:

LETTER #1 — $15 MILLION FOR JERUSALEM REAL ESTATE The Palestinian National Authority

No. mk/20/1994 Ministry of Finance 7.8.1994

In the Name of Allah the Merciful The Honorable Brother, Chairman of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) The Holy Jerusalem

(Top Secret)

Greetings of the Return,
Since the Palestinian National Authority deals through the loyal Palestinian elements with the building of various supporting systems to determine the foundations of the Palestinian state that we all pray to its establishment on our soil of our lovely homeland and with a concentration on the Holy Jerusalem in order to stabilize our foothold there we shall intensify our presence in an active and strong manner.

And since we do not want that this activity shall appear in the name of the Palestinian National Authority lest it be exploited against us for the purpose of political goals in international circles by the other side and this shall harm the peace process and the name of the Palestinian National Authority in international circles and especially with the American administration our master the brother the leader decided the following things:

1. To establish a real estate company that will buy land in Eastern Jerusalem and in the Old City, and only in the name of the company.

2. The capital of the company will be 15 million American dollars in the beginning.

3. The director of the company will be the chairman of its board of directors Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi and the members will be:

1. Bassam 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih
2. The Hajj Fayiz 'Ubaydi
3. 'Abd Abu-Dhiyab
4. Attorney Eli Gozlan
5. 'Abd-al-Rauf Abu-'Asab (Abu-Qa'id)
6. Hajj Tawfiq Abu-Zahrah

And the brother the leader Abu-'Ammar (Yasir 'Arafat — IMRA) [Independent Media Review and Analysis] recommends that the activities of this committee shall be secret and that the protocols and files be removed from

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the eyes of the other side. Respectfully, Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi Minister of Finance

LETTER #2 — $10 MILLION TO SUPPORT ISRAELI ARABS The Palestinian National Authority

No. mk/30/1994 Ministry of Finance 15.8.1994

In the Name of Allah the Merciful The Honorable Brother, Chairman of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) The Holy Jerusalem

(Top Secret)

Greetings of the Return,
In continuation of our letter of 7.8.94, NO mm/30/75 and with the same contents, on the establishment of aiding facilities, the leader Abu-'Ammar (Yasir 'Arafat — IMRA) decided that the activity of the Palestinian National Authority be expanded into Israel and shall concentrate in the "Palestinian Arabs of within", and that this task be assigned to the brother Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, and brothers were selected among the members of Knesset and the local authorities and charity organizations and cooperative institutes and villages and churches, to assist him in the execution of the following things:
1. To assist the various parties that support the establishment of a Palestinian state including the city of Jerusalem.
2. To assist the local authorities which suffer financial deficit.
3. Assistance to the charity organizations and societies.
4. Contributions to the village councils.
5. Contributions to the leading Christian religion and the clergy which administer the churches in their various denominations.
6. These activities will be devoted the sum of ten million American dollars immediately.

And as I mentioned in my aforementioned letter, the brother the leader Abu-'Ammar recommends that the activities of the committee shall not be publicized and shall be remote from journalists and state people. Respectfully, Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi Minister of Finance

'Arafat Receives Former U.S. Official

JN2610185295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received Richard Murphy, former U.S. assistant secretary of state, today.

During the meeting, they discussed the latest developments of the Middle East peace process, as well as the recent U.S. Congress decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem and its adverse effects on the peace process.

The meeting was attended by PLO Executive Committee members Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, and Jamal al-Surani, as well as U.S. Consul-General Edward Abington.

In another development, President 'Arafat has met with a delegation from the Rabbis Organization for Human Rights. They discussed the idea of dialogue among the monotheistic religions.

Jordan Passports for West Bankers Welcomed

JN2510131595 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Oct 95 pp 1, 22

[Exclusive report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza—Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], has welcomed the Jordanian Government's decision to reissue five-year passports to West Bankers who hold green cards, saying: We appreciate and highly value this fraternal move, which came at the instructions of His Majesty King Husayn, who has made a habit of making noble gestures and taking honest pan-Arab stands.

In a statement to the newspaper AL-DUSTUR, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al- Rahim asserted that the PNA views this move as a supportive one that aids efforts to build an independent Palestinian state. Removing difficulties experienced by a large sector of the Palestinian people cannot but be met with gratitude, he added. This move cannot be construed as anything but a sincere fraternal move devoid of any political considerations other than consecrating the special relationship between the two peoples, who are in fact one people.

Responding to a question on whether this development has anything to do with the confederation issue, which has recently been raised by several parties, the PNA secretary general said: We are committed to the Palestine National Council resolutions which stipulate that the issue of confederation must be contemplated only after the Palestinian people exercise their right to self-determination, establish their independent state, and are in a position to decide freely on what they want without any external influences.

Concluding his statement, which reflects the first official PNA position on the passport issue, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said: We appreciate this noble gesture by His

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Majesty King Husayn. We view the decision to reissue Jordanian passports to this category of Palestinians as supporting the PNA as well as efforts to establish an independent Palestinian state which will be the twin of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. [passage omitted]

Poland Foreign Ministry Recognizes Passport

JN2010163195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Polish Foreign Ministry today declared its recognition of the Palestinian passport.

A Polish memorandum received by the Palestinian Embassy in Poland said the recognition take effect in November.

Swedish Government Recognizes Passport

JN2610213095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat today received a cable from the Swedish Government to the effect that it has recognized the Palestinian passport.

'Arafat 'Dissatisfied' With Janin Deployment Pace

TA2710094495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Authority sources say that PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat is dissatisfied with the pace of the Palestinian Police's deployment in the Janin area. 'Arafat summoned the heads of the Palestinian Police and demanded that they step up the pace of the deployment in coordination with Israel.

Sources in Jericho say that at this point 150 Palestinian policemen are prepared to move from Jericho to Janin, but Israeli security sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that they will not allow it.

Janin Liaison Office on Entry of NSF Personnel

JN2610203195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Ziyad al-Atrash, official in charge of the higher liaison committee, has said that the joint liaison office in Janin began to discuss detailed plans concerning the entry of the rest of the National Security personnel and the work of joint patrols.

Brigadier General Isma'il Jabr, commander of the Palestinian National Security Forces [NSF] in the West Bank, held a meeting in Janin today to discuss necessary arrangements for the deployment of Palestinian NSF. The meeting was attended by Colonel Jamil Ahmad, commander of Janin police; and Colonel Fayiz 'Arafat, commander of the NSF in the city; Abu-al-Tayyib Jaradat, official in charge of preventive security in it; and Walid Abu-Muways; head of Janin's municipal committee.

Twenty Palestinian officers are expected to arrive in Janin on 29 October. This will be followed by the entry of 1,000 Palestinian NSF personnel into the city.

Al-Zahhar: No Decision on Hamas Political Party

TA2610181595 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 25 Oct 95 pp 1, 17

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza — Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar has said that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] will not participate in the Authority's elections as a movement and the issue of whether to participate will be decided by the political party which the movement is striving to establish. He added: The party must have convincing reasons to participate in the elections. Likewise, there should be reasons for a decision not to participate. He pointed out that if the Authority's conditions for participating in the elections are unacceptable, the movement will not be able to participate in them.

Al-Zahhar stressed that the parties law proposed by the National Authority [NA] on the establishment of Palestinian parties is "rejected by the Palestinian street." Therefore, a political party has not been established to date. He said there will be coordination with the other factions in order to draw up a parties law that will be proposed to the Authority. Political parties will be established on the basis of this law. They will include all active forces from various currents wishing to participate in a political party.

With regard to the possibility of his participation in the Hamas negotiating delegation, al-Zahhar said that the members of the Hamas negotiating delegation have not been chosen yet and that he has not received an invitation to participate in it. He pointed out, however, that the delegation members will be from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and abroad. He explained that neither the time nor venue of the talks has not been determined yet. He added that the mission of the mediation delegation that traveled to Sudan was to bring about a rapprochement between Hamas and the Authority and get the two sides to the negotiating table.

Al-Zahhar stressed that there are no splits in Hamas whatsoever and that reality proves this. We have not heard of any leading figure defecting with his followers from the movement; however, there are personal views and opinions. This is very natural. In the end, the movement's decisions are binding on everyone.

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With regard to the NA's demand that Hamas halt military action, al-Zahhar said: "I cannot address this matter. It will be discussed in the talks between Hamas and the NA." He called on the NA to release all detainees and said that the escape of three Hamas prisoners was the result of bad treatment and lengthy prison sentences.

Islamic Jihad Official Denies Dialogue With PA

TA2610180695 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 25 Oct 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, QUDS PRESS — An official in the opposition Islamic Jihad Movement has denied the existence of a dialogue between his movement and the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Shaykh Nafidh 'Azzam, an Islamic Jihad leader in Gaza, said: "There is no kind of dialogue between the Islamic Jihad and the PA."

In a statement to QUDS PRESS, Shaykh 'Azzam said that talk about the establishment of a political party by Islamic Jihad "is premature." He pointed out that the matter requires intensive consultations.

'Azzam added: "The Israeli occupation is still present in over 40 percent of Gaza Strip lands, and it will be present in a larger proportion in the West Bank." He expressed his surprise at those who talk about the establishment of a political party "with the intensive presence of the Israeli occupation and settlements."

'Azzam affirmed his movement's position regarding the Palestinian elections, which he termed "one of the results of an unacceptable accord."

PFLP Leader Responds to Ghawshah Remarks

JN2610204895 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Oct 95 p 21

["Text" of press statement by PFLP Secretary General Dr. George Habash in response to statements by Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement; published in AL-RA'Y on 25 October]

[FBIS Translated Text] What Mr. Ghawshah said about me telling him that "we stopped armed resistance" is baseless. I have not met with Mr. Ghawshah for months. I hope the reason behind Ghawshah's baseless statement is inaccuracy in reporting what he said.

My personal stand and that of the PFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] continues to stress our people's right to all forms of struggle, including armed resistance. This is our legitimate right and that of all peoples who are resisting occupation. Past and present experiences of peoples show that the occupation cannot be removed without the mobilization of all the people's potentials and their resort to all forms of struggle.

Our people will continue their resistance by all means and forms, including armed resistance, until the Israeli occupation is removed and our people's national rights are secured. Foremost of these rights is their right to repatriation, self-determination, and establishing their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

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Algeria

OAU Observers Arrive To Monitor Campaign

LD2610223695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the framework of the OAU's participation in observing the conduct of the presidential elections, the first round of which will take place on 16 November, a delegation of observers from this organization arrived today in Algeria led by Mr Kal, chief of African affairs.

During its stay in Algeria the OAU observers delegation will watch over the conduct of the election campaign, carry out field visits, and hold talks with officials of the Independent National Committee for Monitoring the Presidential Elections and with representatives of the candidates.

TV Broadcasts Zeroual Election Campaign Statement

LD2710003595 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Election campaign statement by President Liamine Zeroual in Algiers on 26 October; read by Mohamed Lakhdar Lakhdari — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the Compassionate. O male and female citizens: On 16 November, you will turn towards the ballot boxes to elect a president of the republic. The struggler Liamine Zeroual is one of the candidates who is submitting his platform to the people to get their trust and continue to perform the duty he has started in order to achieve a new national order — an order that aims basically to return to the November [revolution] origins, and rebuild a strong state of a democratic republic in which every citizen will enjoy his rights.

Ladies and gentlemen, Liamine Zeroual's program is a program that is capable of bringing about an effective break with the corruption and chaos that have prevailed in the country's during the past years, for two reasons. The first reason is personal which concerns Liamine Zeroual as a person. He is a man who is not one of those who were responsible for the running of the country's affairs since 1962. You are all aware that all his posts were in the military field. He did not take part in the running of the country's political and economic affairs. [passage omitted]

The second reason concerns his platform. You are aware that Liamine Zeroual does not have a [political] party. He has chosen that his sole party should be Algeria and the people of Algeria. Therefore, his platform is a reification of the principles of the first November declaration. It also consists of real solutions for the problems and sufferings of all the people.

In fact, the platform truthfully and sincerely expresses the concerns of workers, toilers, farmers, young people, women, war veterans, and all the citizens of every stratum.

Ladies and gentlemen: If you put your trust in Liamine Zeroual on 16 November, you will, without doubt, contribute toward the eradication of all the deviations that have brought the country into this disaster, because Liamine Zeroual is determined to wage a real war on all the manifestations of utter contempt, bribery, tribalism, misuse of power, and exorbitant and unlawful wealth. These serious diseases have permeated the country's institutions and made the citizen lose trust in officials.

What are the solutions? Liamine Zeroual proposes a number of solutions, some of which consist of rehabilitating the civil service. [passage omitted]

A special body should be established to follow up all kinds of suspicious behavior that smells of bribery, a serious disease, in order to combat and eradicate it at all levels. A law should be issued on the declaration of the personal property by all officials before and after their term of office. [passage omitted]

The aim behind all these measures is to restore morality in the running of the affairs of the state, so that citizens will regain their trust in the institutions of their country. It is imperative that the Mafia mentality and the mentality of gangs, pressure groups and interest groups which have destroyed the country's institutions over the last 10 years is firmly combated.

Ladies and gentlemen, in order to implement this platform it is imperative to start a real, extensive, and open dialogue within our society, in which all the active groups participate. That would include organizations, association, trade unions, the Higher Council for Youths, youth organizations, so that everyone in this country will feel that they are involved in the war against the manifestations of corruption and deviation in order to build a strong state that will be run by institutions based on morality. [passage omitted]

The true Islamic religion, Arabism, and Tamazight are in fact the common factors which unite the Algerian people. It is imperative to fight against any behavior and attitudes that exploit any of these factors to divide the people. Therefore, it would be unacceptable to continue to exploit the Islamic faith, the Muhammadan faith, our Arabic or Tamazight languages for political, power, or partisan reasons that would divide the people. [passage omitted]

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Liamine Zeroual depends on God, first of all, and your trust to bring about the realization of the dream of millions who look forward to the day when they could see their country emerge out of the crisis and put out the embers, when their country will be strong and stable, and in which freedom and justice prevail and there will be no room for corruption and recklessness.

Ladies and gentlemen, Liamine Zeroual extends his hand to you asking you to help him, and for all of us to cooperate to build a prosperous and advanced Algeria, where justice prevails among all the citizens.

FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS2710102995 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 24 Oct 95

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe"; quotation marks as received — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Editorial

Nothing good is to be expected from the Junta! Praise be to Allah Who Says: "Those to who men said: "A great army is gathering against you, so fear them": But it only increased their Faith: they said: "For us Allah suffice, and He is the best Guardian.".[Koran Surrat Ali-Imran, 3:173]

The armed struggle in Algeria is almost four years old now. Since the beginning, the military Junta propaganda machine was telling the international and national opinions that the "terrorists" are almost finished now. Fantasist military reports published by the Junta "independent" press and echoed rapidly and enthusiastically by some biased media, were becoming less and less credible as a direct correlation between the "Junta political manoeuvres" and the "number of "terrorist" killed", became more obvious. Two important events of the relationship between the above two factors come to one's mind and which show that the KGB formed Junta secret police, "La S.M" has full control over these so-called "independent" or "private" press:

— Few weeks before the announcement by General Zeroual of "his elections", the Junta media started a campaign of disinformation in which reports of thousand of "terrorists exterminated" a week, was the norm. The "smart" Junta will always attack its imaginary "terrorists" when their leadership is in congregation. There is always quality and quantity in the Junta attacks.

— As General Zeroual was about to go to the UN two weeks ago, the Junta propaganda machine started the process again and this time also a thousand or so of "terrorists" were killed each week sometimes "four hundred at once including the leadership". The Junta may have taught that if General Zeroul go with one of the "independent and private" newspaper such as "EL WATAN", under his arm, he can then pass it around to the UN guests and this will bring him few serious invitations to diner open to the TV cameras, of course. Who knows? The UN may even decide to send thousand of observers to boost the publicity of the "election show" to an oscar level!

But what is the reality behind the Junta "propaganda smock screen"? The Junta can never win the conflict militarily. When the armed struggle started, the Junta had a relatively well equipped and organised army, the Mujahedeen had Allah and nothing else! Four years later and despite the technology of night combat the Junta has received and despite the formation of armed and paid militia and the recall of the army reserves, the Mujahedeen number has increased beyond expectation! The Mujahedeen strategy is getting more efficient, their military tactics more adequate. Their attacks have became more professional, their military operations have improved quantitatively and qualitatively. Observers are unanimous in describing the conflict between the Junta and the Mujahedeen as a combat between two forces of which, one (the Junta's) is diminishing and the other (the Mujahedeen's) is increasing in terms of power, organisation and discipline.

The Junta propaganda has always argued to its international financial fund providers that the issue in Algeria is merely an economical one. The Junta repression and its fight against the Mujahedeen is absorbing most of the financial cash injected regularly while the rest is divided between private overseas bank accounts and the buying of a very strict minimum of necessary outdated stocks of food and medicine. While the Junta "mis- managers" are talking about economical reforms that will take Algeria out of its "economical crisis", the people have seen only harsh unpopular measures, devastating economical indexes including an alarming increase in the "official figures" of unemployment. The "hidden unemployment", that of people having job positions but no work to do because of lack of important industrial spare parts, sabotage,etc...is even more alarming! Even the "privatisation" chapter of the IMF program is being postponed by orders from the Mujahedeen because the transfer of the Algerian "collective wealth" to private hands under these circumstances of "obscurity", is considered suspicions and a mere "money laundering operation". The Military regime has reached its limits of an "uneconomical enterprise" which is more wise to throw away!

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On the political front and to somewhat ease its "unfrequentable" image in international circles, the Junta has launched a show under the title of "presidential elections". The "electoral campaign" phase of the farce, has begun last sunday (22/10/95) but the most comic part of the show so far has been when one of the candidates went on the Junta TV to do his campaign but could not even mention the name of his principal opponent while criticising his policies. The Algerian people had to guess that this candidate was talking about General Zeroual. What a freedom of expression during these "elections"!! Never mind freedom of choice. The Junta is only interested to prove if it can, to the international opinion that people have voted. As for the results it is the only one who has full control on them and the announced percentages are probably determined already. So the Algerian people have more to gain by boycotting these elections as the representative political opposition advised them and a lot to loss by not doing so!

For those who are familiar with comparative studies of low intensity conflicts, they surely know, as an experienced Algerian politician said it last week, that the Lebanon crisis was not solved by one, two or three "presidential elections". These elections without prior political solution had only added to the suffering and devastation of Lebanon and its people.

It has been a long time since Algerian people have despaired to see anything good coming from the Junta!

The controversial meeting of General Zeroual with President Chirac!

According to the French and the Junta diplomacy, the controversial meeting which was announced between President Chirac and General Zeroual did not take place.

According to President Chirac, he met General Zeroual for fifteen minutes in the presence of the UN General secretary Mr Butrus Butrus Ghali. President Chirac told a press conference that the discussion was confined to the form the meeting should take and it was on this point that disagreement with General Zeroual has appeared and both of them stood on their positions. General Zeroual insisted that the meeting should be covered by the cameras of the media where else President Chirac wanted to separate General Zeroual,the head of the Junta from General Zeroual the candidate of his own succession since the "presidential" electoral campaign has already started on that same day. According to General Zeroual spokesman Mr Mihoubi, [as published] "the meeting has lost its meaning"! "Was its meaning to make a film called "General Zeroual in New york"?", some may ask.

Anyway, General Zeroual's advisors being concentrated on the electoral campaign of the General, have already classified their options in the following orders:

1) A meeting with the French President under a high media coverage to enhance the posture of the General.
2) A refusal of a meeting to enhance the "nationalist and hero of the independence of Algeria" the one "who loves his country so much that he joined the struggle at an age where many were still playing cowboys". A face of dignity vis a vis France can bring some electoral dividends.
3) accepting a meeting without the media.

So General Zeroual could give President Chirac, an answer in just fifteen minutes. Wait! the story is not finished yet! The French and the Junta delegations have stayed in the same hotel in New York ("The Intercontinental"). The French delegation was on the 14th floor while the Junta delegation was on the 8th floor. One can not say if the two teams had discussions or not but when the Junta spokesman Mr Mihoubi talk about "we don't have to take lessons about democracy from France!", this most probably means that they have.

However, concerning why President chirac has met General Zeroual in the presence of the UN general secretary, "the Enlightenment" does not have an answer but suspects the meeting to be related to the number of UN observers to the Junta elections.

Is General Zeroual going to be wise enough to cancel the whole show even under the pretext of sparing the Algerian people lives or is he going to tell the Junta Generals as Houari Boumedien told Tahar Zbiri in 1967: "if you want to remove me from this chair, you will have to kill me!"?

Conferences on Algeria in London.

On saturday 14/10/95, the University of Westminster in London has hosted a conference on Algeria. "The Enlightenment" would like to apologise for not reporting it in its last issue due to lack of space. The conference was organised by the former Algerian Prime minister Dr Abdelhamid Brahimi [as published]. The principal guests were Brother Abdelkrim Ould Adda [as published] representing the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and Mr Abdelhamid Mahri [as published] the General secretary of the National Liberation Front (FLN). Shaykh Rached Guenouchi [as published] the president of the Tunisian Islamic party "Ennahda" was also among the guests. After the introductory and welcome speech, Mr Mahri started by saying: "Islam was a fundamental element in the struggle against the colonialism." He Also added: "Algeria has known democracy, elections and multypar-

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tyism through its proximity with the west and that the Algerian society is very attached to social justice." He said that these three historical elements are still present in the Algerian society of today. Mr Mahri added: "The actual crisis has appeared and got worst because these elements were not taken in consideration. We did not evaluate properly that Islam is an essential reference for the Algerian society and which covers in its aspects the regulation of power. We also did not take into consideration that the Algerian people will trust a democratic verdict and will give their opinion on the regime of power and we did not take into consideration their aspirations and attachment to social justice. When the road is block for the Algerian people to fulfil their aspiration, they will seek the path of armed resistance." The intervention of Brother Ould Adda was centred around a historical review of the FIS struggle with the abuse of the regime since the formation of the first, than he added: "In consideration to the responsibility, the FIS have accepted the principle of its participation in finding a negotiated solution. And going from that basis, the FIS leadership have accepted while still in jail, to meet with a delegation from the regime in order to search for a solution. But the regime was always the first to undermine the solution. The authorities have never been serious about finding a solution. The objective of all the meetings, was "to throw sand in the eyes" and to appease the West concerning the politics of the regime which will attract financial loans and debt rescheduling. The objective of the meetings when timed with the approach of "elections" was to divide the national contract parties in due course by misleading some of them in making them believe that there is another alternative solution between one of them and the regime.Finally, I must add that one of the reasons of the dialogue failure is the regime's bad intention and its failure to present a project of solution". Talking about the national contract brother Ould Adda said: "It is a national political achievement which has hit the regime and has unveiled its true nature by revelling the wide gap there is between it and the Algerian people." He added: "One of the reasons why the FIS is still holding to the national contract is that it has brought together a free opposition which was not established by the regime." Brother Ould Adda talked about the "elections" saying: "The conditions are not fulfilled for them to take place. There are manoeuvres from the authorities to stay in power." He also added: "those who are going to win these elections are the same who have cancelled the elections in 1992. We refuse elections which will endorse the dictatorship and endorse the role of the military institution. The authorities are not organising the elections for the Algerian people but to settle differences within themselves between those who advocate the political solution and those who advocate the security one."

When answering questions from the audience and in relation to the description of what is going on in Algeria as violence, brother Ould Adda said: "When the people fight for one of their rights, it is called a sacred revolution in many countries because it is a support for the right and a fight for their freedom and the dead of these revolutions are recorded in the important registers of the state. As for our case which is related to a muslim people fighting for their right, it is considered violence. As far as we are concerned we call this violence Jihad and a legitimate and just struggle. And we call our dead martyrs. What is going on in Algeria is Jihad "ignited" by the institution of terrorism by the military institution."

News of Jihad and Mujahedeen!

Clarifications from the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS):

The national commander of the AIS, Shaykh Madani Mezrak [as published] has issued a communique in which he exposed the propaganda of the Junta which gave him as dead some two weeks ago.

In the communique Shaykh Madani Mezrak relate a battle that took place for a week starting on the 01/10/95, in a region known as "Estah" situated at the joining of Setif, Jijel and M'sila departments. The Junta used air and land power started to bombard the region. The Junta troops have not succeeded in marching into the region and have lost 150 soldiers while four of the Mujahedeen were killed (May Allah accept them as martyrs).

Jihad operations:

"we don't like to " beat around the bush ", we prefer clarity and frankness even if it means to be hanged for what we believe to be a duty and a right. The struggle against the regime of the military junta has become a legitimate and lawful duty as demonstrated previously, in order to "grab" the right of the people to freely choose. " [Shaykh Abu Abdelfatah ali Belhadj in " Fasl el kalam fi mouajahate dolm el hokam" ("The conclusive criterion in confronting injustice from the rulers "). page 303. Book written from cell No 09 in the Blida Military jail. 1992]

Dellys: A Junta police inspector was shot and his weapon collected.
Tablat: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a patrol of Junta gendarmes. Four Junta gendarmes were shot, many wounded and a good quantity of weapon collected.
Boufarik: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a Junta patrol. 3 Junta soldiers were shot. Two "Klashs"

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and a telecommunication system were collected as well as a good quantity of ammunition.
Kalitous: A Junta secret police officer was shot.
Kouba: A Junta secret police agent was shot.
Mouzaia: The Mujahedeen shot two Junta armed militia and collected their weapons.
Belcourt: The Mujahedeen shot a Junta police officer and collected his "Berretta" and important documents which contain very useful information concerning the Junta underground operations.
El Harrach: A Junta gendarme was shot in Belford.
Bordj el Kiffan: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a Junta patrol. Two junta gendarmes were shot and a "klash" collected.
Ain Anadja: A Junta police commissioner and his assistant were shot. Two "Berretta", one "klash" and a telecommunication system were collected. In another operation, a Junta secret police agent was shot.
Ouled Yaich: The Mujahedeen have shot a Junta officer having a rank of lieutenant and collected his weapon of "Makarov" make.
Oued Djare: The Mujahedeen have set up a roadblock on the road which lead to the city of Medea. Three Junta soldiers and two Junta policemen were shot and their weapons collected.
Chabli: Three Junta policemen were shot amongst them a commissioner. Their weapons and documents were collected. In another operation, the Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a patrol of the Junta "special forces" using explosive. The six Junta soldiers perished in this operation and some weapons were collected.
Bougaraa: The Mujahedeen have launched an attack against a roadblock guarded by a group of the Junta "special force" (Red Beret). Four Junta soldiers were shot and three were wounded.
Gue de Constantine: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a patrol of the Junta "Red Beret" using explosives and hand grenades. The outcome of this operation is not yet known. In another operation the Mujahedeen have attacked the guards of the criminal responsible for the security of Algiers airport. This torturer use to be in charge of the torture centre of Chateauneuf.
Bab Ezzouar: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a Junta patrol of "special force". Three Junta soldiers were shot and two "Klashs" were collected.
Meftah: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a Junta patrol. Three Junta gendarmes were shot and others were wounded. The Junta has followed this operation by arresting many of the youth.
Bourouba: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a Junta "special force" (Linda). Three Junta soldiers were shot in an operation of uneven force. Two Mujahedeen were killed, May Allah accept them as martyrs.
Bir Mourad Rais: The Mujahedeen have arrested a Junta secret police officer having the rank of lieutenant by the name of Larfaoui Nacer. Many useful information about the Junta methods were revealed.

Important denying!

"The Enlightenment" has been wrongly accused of being against the French language just because it is published in English. "The Enlightenment" would like to clarify that it does not have anything against the French people, French language or French culture. If it is published in English it is for specific technicalities of its own. Similar accusations were addressed to the FIS leadership in 1991 to which Shaykh Abdelkader Hachani historical answer: "We are with the Right in whatever language it is and we are against Wrong even if it were in the language of Koran"!

A true believer can also add that a muslim Frenchman of European descendence for example or a Chinese muslim or a muslim from South Africa or...are closer to his heart than any renegade from Algeria even if this later is his own son, brother or father.

This does not prevent "The Enlightenment" to strongly oppose the policy of unconditional support to the military Junta which has been pursued by the French authorities so far.

Egypt

Musa, Spanish Minister on Talks, Jerusalem

NC2610182695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1057 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Oct (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a three hour meeting this morning with the European Union [EU] troika delegation led by Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana. The delegation is currently visiting Cairo as part of a tour of Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Palestine.

Speaking at a news conference after the meeting, Musa said that the talks dealt with several issues, including the situation in Europe, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. He added that the talks also dealt with coordination efforts on the Amman economic conference, regional cooperation, and the regional situation with regard to peace and security in the area. Also, the situation in Bosnia was discussed.

Musa went on to say that the talks also dealt with the Barcelona summit scheduled to be held in November, relations between Egypt and the EU, and the current stage of bilateral negotiations on concluding the partnership agreement.

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Stressing that Egypt has increased its attention toward relations with the EU, the foreign minister said: We asserted that this cooperation will be beneficial to both sides. Cooperation in the Mediterranean represents a principle of the Egyptian foreign policy.

Spanish Foreign Minister Solana said that the EU troika delegation believed the time was right to visit the region and it was only natural to start the tour in Egypt due to its important and influential role in the region. He added: We agree with Minister 'Amr Musa's statement that the time is appropriate for our tour because the peace process has taken a new turning point following the signing of the Washington agreement to expand Palestinian self-rule. The Amman economic summit will be held soon and this will give incentive to the economic cooperation process in the region. He said that the Barcelona summit will be held in November and the agreement between Egypt and the EU is imminent. Both will boost bilateral relations.

Solana noted that the meeting was very fruitful and there was detailed discussion of all issues raised. He added, we value the positive results achieved with the Egyptian foreign minister during these talks.

In response to a question about the U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, Solana said: We are not members of the U.S. Congress. The European countries have a clear and definite stand on this issue.

Asked what was agreed on in today's talks with Musa, Solana said: We agreed on a number of issues connected with the Amman summit. We also agreed on the Mediterranean meeting in Barcelona in addition to promotion of bilateral ties.

In reply to a question about Libya's participation in the Barcelona conference, Solana said: Regarding the Barcelona summit, it has been agreed that it will be attended by the 15 EU member states and the 12 Mediterranean countries that have relations with the EU. No other country will be added now, but the situation could change. He stressed that the partnership negotiations between the EU and Egypt are not impeded by any problems or obstacles and the two sides will sign the partnership agreement in early 1996.

Musa on Embassy Issue, Amman Summit, Barcelona

NC2610133095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Oct (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa stated today that the start of the Israeli withdrawal from Janin in the occupied West Bank is a very important issue. He said that it is even more important to continue this withdrawal so that it is completed before the end of February 1996 and Palestinian legislative elections can begin.

In statements to journalists today, 'Amr Musa added that this withdrawal is without a doubt an important step and is a cause for optimism.

Regarding the U.S. Congress decision on moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, 'Amr Musa said that this is a decision of the U.S. Congress that the U.S. Administration does not agree with. We believe it is a decision of no value in as far as it affects the status of Jerusalem, he added.

The foreign minister clarified that the status of Jerusalem will continue to be a point of negotiation. He said Israel's position is unique and does not commit us in any way. Also, Musa noted, we do not believe it has any legal basis to take individual measures.

On the European Union's participation in the Amman economic summit and its position on establishing a regional development bank in the area, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said the European position has not yet been crystallized because it is a group position that does not unanimously agree on the establishment of the bank. Individually, there is increasing support among the European countries and they have no objection to establishing such a bank in Cairo.

Answering a question on the security dimensions of the Barcelona summit, which will be held at the end of November, the foreign minister said that each party has equal interests on all issues and in all relations. He confirmed that the general goal of the conference is to push European-Mediterranean cooperation simultaneously with European cooperation with Eastern Europe.

Radio Commentary Views Embassy Move Decision

NC2610175295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Commentary by Muhammad Sharaf: "The U.S. Congress' Decision on Jerusalem and its Negative Ramifications for the Peace Process"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Undoubtedly, the U.S. Congress' decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem has cast dark clouds over the Middle East peace process. According to a U.S. presidential spokesman, this decision is an unjustified and unwarranted assault on this process.

It is clear that the decision was issued at a very inconvenient time. It was issued when Palestinian and Arab opponents of peace have become prepared to accept

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this process and stop the violent and negative measures against it. It was issued before the International Economic Conference for the Middle East and North Africa in Amman on 29 October. Like the Casablanca conference last year, the Amman conference aims to prepare the ground for economic cooperation in the Middle East, adopt principles, and take some steps toward this cooperation under the umbrella of comprehensive peace between the Arab countries and Israel when this peace is achieved.

There is another negative development in the peace process. We mean the failure of the efforts to resume the talks on the Syrian-Israeli track. There are reports that Israel has postponed reaching a peace agreement with Syria until after the Israeli elections in November 1996.

We simply say that comprehensive peace between the Arab countries and Israel is still farfetched. It faces real obstacles and difficulties which should not be underestimated. The only real positive factor in the situation is that peace has imposed itself as a strategic option on all parties in light of the extensive regional and international developments since the beginning of the 1990's.

Nevertheless, no one can predict what negative effects and ramifications the U.S. Congress' decision on Jerusalem could have on the peace process. Jerusalem is a very sensitive issue for the Arab and Islamic countries and peoples. Whatever stance is taken by the U.S. Administration, which has already declared its opposition to the Congress' decision on Jerusalem, no one can ignore what the Arab and Islamic people will conclude about the Congress' decision.

The question is whether these negative developments will affect the momentum the peace process has gained, especially after the agreement on the expansion of Palestinian self-rule. We will leave this question to be answered by upcoming events and developments. We will only discuss the possible ramifications for the Economic Conference of the Middle East and North Africa. Egypt will attend this conference with a big delegation from the government, the private sector, and businessmen. Egypt's participation is necessary and is dictated by national and supreme Arab interest. The conference will prepare the climate for future comprehensive economic cooperation in the Middle East. The Egyptian foreign minister said Egypt will seek to host the next conference at the end of 1996 or the beginning of 1997. This does not conflict with Egypt's declared stance that economic cooperation is closely connected with comprehensive peace between the Arab countries and Israel.

Therefore, Egypt will work to regulate the steps for regional cooperation with the process of comprehensive peace, disarmament, and the security situation in the region. However, the stalemate on the Syrian track and the U.S. Congress' decision will undoubtedly cast dark clouds over the Amman conference. We do not believe that Israel's attempt to circumvent a comprehensive peace and to control the economic future of the region can achieve results. Real, comprehensive cooperation cannot be achieved behind the backs of the people. The people will make this cooperation and they will be affected by it in their various spheres of life.

Newspapers on 'Dangers' of U.S. Embassy Decision

NC2710090695 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0600 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Oct (MENA)—Today's Cairo newspapers highlight the dangers of the U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and its negative effect on the peace process in the region.

AL-AHRAM says in its editorial that this decision deals a heavy blow not only to the peace process but also to the credibility of the U.S. role in the region. This decision could wreck the peace process which was, above all, based on the principle of land for peace and on honest and unbiased participation in the peace process.

The newspaper explains that this decision practically constitutes recognition of the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. It contradicts the legitimate international resolutions, foremost UN Resolution 242, stipulating that one cannot acquire land through aggression and occupation. This applies to the city of Jerusalem, which is part of the Arab territories that were occupied in 1967.

The newspaper asserts that this biased resolution shows the extent of Israeli and Jewish influence in the U.S. Congress, and does so in a way that threatens belief in U.S. neutrality between the Arabs and Israel, which both sides hope for. The newspaper points out that it is important for the Arab side to use the cards it has in its hand to apply pressure to alter this decision.

AL-AHRAM adds that the resolution changes the principles of the U.S. stance on Jerusalem. Ever since 1967, the U.S. had considered Jerusalem to be disputed territory to which Resolution 242 applies.

AL-AKHBAR says in today's editorial that external problems do not appreciably influence U.S. elections, either for president or Congress. American voters do not care about foreign affairs, except as they affect his personal affairs.

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The paper notes that it is strange for the leader of the U.S. Republican Party to begin his election campaign with an issue that is of no interest to American voters and that causes more harm than good.

The newspaper says that the head of the Republican Party, as well as Congress and its members from both the Republican and the Democratic parties, are ignorant of U.S. interests and are blindly biased toward Israel. They are also flagrantly violating the principles of international law as stipulated by the Security Council resolutions on the fate of Jerusalem.

It explains that Senator Dole has arrogated to himself the right to offer the whole city to Israel and to declare it the capital of Israel, and to hell with international law and peace in the Middle East.

The opposition newspaper AL-WAFD affirms in its editorial that this is an unforgivable insult to all Arabs and Muslims, and is counter to the international resolutions that the United States has constantly used as a pretext.

The paper says this is no accident; U.S.-Zionist rapprochement must necessarily take place at the expense of Arab and Islamic rights, and let the UN resolutions go to hell.

AL-WAFD adds that the U.S. moves on Jerusalem are an old story known to all. The occupied city is a trump card that is played by U.S. politicians in all elections.

The newspaper explains that the electoral race has begun, as the Democrats and Republicans compete for Jewish votes. This game, which the newspaper describes as destructive, is at the expense of the future of the city of Jerusalem.

It points out that U.S. policy makers have become more Jewish than the Jews themselves.

Court Postpones Muslim Brotherhood Hearing

NC2610200595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 26 Oct (MENA)—The Higher Military Court decided today to postpone hearing the case of the second group of the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood [MB] involving 22 defendants to 31 October. The hearing was postponed by a request from the defendants to enable them to appoint a defense lawyer. The defendants will remain in custody.

Today's hearing began at 1600 amid tight security measures in the presence of a large number of lawyers, journalists, and families of the defendants. It lasted about one hour.

At the beginning of the session, the defendants' names were announced and the number of lawyers who will defend them was determined. The defense demanded the release of all the defendants and the hospitalization of some of them because they are suffering from serious diseases.

Some of the defendants stressed that the military prosecution did not investigate them and that they do not know what the charges against them are. [passage omitted]

Earlier today, the Higher Military Court decided to adjourn hearing the case of the first group of the dissolved MB involving 49 defendants, one of whom is at large, to 29 October to listen to the military prosecution's presentation. [passage omitted]

Some members of the Journalists Association attended both sessions but others could not enter the court.

EU Troika Ministers on Mideast Peace Document

LD2610211695 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network in Spanish 1300 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Prime Minister] Felipe Gonzalez is in Tunisia and Javier Solana, the foreign minister, is in the Middle East, accompanied by his two EU Troika colleagues from France and Italy. The aim of Solana's visit is to put to the countries of the region the basic document for the Euro-Mediterranean Conference which will take place in Barcelona next month. The minister began the tour in Egypt and is continuing it in Lebanon. Radio 1 special correspondent Pedro Fernandez Cespedes is there. Good afternoon.

[Cespedes] Good afternoon. At the head of the EU troika, Minister Javier Solana is seeking agreement on the final document which will be signed next month at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona. This morning he took this step with Egypt. Only two hours ago Javier Solana talked with his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa in Cairo, basically about the peace process in the Middle East. This process will be receiving, above all, the political, economic, and financial support of the EU and it will take concrete form in the elections which will almost certainly be held in the Palestinian autonomous territories on 20 January next year, the day before the start of Ramadan in 1996.

[Begin Solana recording] In our view it is very important that the elections should be held before Ramadan, because otherwise we would lose time which I believe is very important for the stability of the region. I believe that, from the recent talks which we had with Prime Minister Rabin in New York two days ago, we have practically agreed that the elections would take place at the end of January, that is to say immediately before Ramadan begins. [end recording]

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NDP Announces Electoral Candidates

NC2610155895 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kamal al-Shadhili, assistant secretary general of the National Democratic Party [NDP], has stated that the NDP will enter the upcoming People's Assembly elections in all 222 electoral constituencies. He said there are no interparty agreements to leave some constituencies for other parties.

At a news conference today, al-Shadhili announced the NDP candidates. He said the NDP is rich with members and leaders and the problem has been which members and leaders to choose as candidates. He explained that the NDP members who have not been nominated as candidates continue to be regarded as leaders and some have served as deputies in the current parliament. There are many ways to benefit from their expertise in all party positions.

Al-Shadhili said nine ministers and seven women have been nominated as candidates. He said the candidates include university professors, teachers, businessmen, former judges, former army and police officers, lawyers, accountants, and trade union leaders.

Mauritania

'Wave of Arrests' Continues Following Coup Attempt

AB2710075895 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1830 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The wave of arrests continues in Mauritania within the rank of the pro-Ba'ath activists in the aftermath following a failed coup plot masterminded by Iraq and aimed at toppling President Maaouiya ould Sid'Ahmed Taya. This afternoon, Mauritanian security services arrested one parliamentarian and some journalists. Salem Mechbour Salem has the details from Nouakchott:

[Begin Salem recording] Six other arrests took place this morning. Most of the arrests were made within the ranks of Mauritanian journalists, sympathizers or activists of the Arab nationalist Ba'ath Movement. This afternoon in Nouadhibou, the Mauritanian economic capital, the correspondent of the Mauritanian daily independent newspaper (VOIE), (Jedena Deitah), witnessed the arrest of a journalist and chief at the news desk at the national radio. His name is (Dey ould Mohamed Lemine Salek), a former member of the Ba'ath Movement. People are also talking about the arrest of other members of the same movement such as (Yahyia ould Oudahat) and (Ahmed ould Biya), who were leading a project at the Ministry of Communication and in charge of Relations with Parliament respectively, along with a journalist at the Mauritania Press Agency who was arrested just when he was entering his office.

Two parliamentarians, one from the ruling party and the other from the opposition, the Union for Democracy and Progress, were also arrested this afternoon in the interior of the country. But the most important event of the day was the arrest of former information minister and current general secretary at the National Assembly. He is (Mohamed Haouya ould Bridleyle), often presented as the ideologist of the Ba'ath Movement in Mauritania.

He was arrested in 1988, tried and sent to prison in (Tchicha), in the east of Mauritania. He benefited from the general amnesty accorded by the Mauritanian head of state in 1991. An independent source disclosed that 12 officers of the Mauritania Armed Forces and a police commissioner serving in Nouadhibou the economic capital, were also arrested. It seems that the security forces are tracking down people in all quarters. All the people who are supposed to try to destabilize or topple the ould Taya regime. [end recording]

Morocco

Kingdom Rejects U.S. Plan To Transfer Embassy

LD2710004495 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Kingdom of Morocco has received with amazement the U.S. Congress endorsement of a ruling on the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Avid to Holy Jerusalem by 1999.

The Kingdom of Morocco, whose monarch is the chairman of the Jerusalem Committee of the Organization of Islamic Conference, expresses its total rejection of the decision, which could seriously harm the special status of the holy city, particularly its Arab and Islamic nature.

The decision, which is in breach of the relevant UN resolutions, particularly UN Security Council Resolution 378 of 1980 and the Oslo accord between the PLO and Israel, could obstruct the peace process that started in Madrid in 1991.

U.S. Bill Said To Violate International Charters

LD2610125295 Rabat MAP in English 1240 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Oct. 26 (MAP) — The bill passed Tuesday [24 October] by the US Congress to move by 1999 the US Embassy from

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Tel- Aviv to Al-Quds (Jerusalem) violates international charters, Moroccan 'BAYANE EL-YOM' daily writes this Thursday.

The bill, passed while the peace process reached encouraging results, is an attempt to bring back the Arab-Israeli conflict to its starting point, the daily of the Party for Progress and Socialism (PPS/opposition) says in an editorial titled 'An Unfair Decision Deserving Denunciation'.

The daily voices hope that the wisdom shown by the American Administration will win over the maneuvers of the US Congress and will abort this decision that offends Arabs and Muslims, for whom Al-Quds is a holy city.

The daily also voices hope that Arab countries will react the soonest possible to counter the plan, categorically reject the decision of the Congress and reaffirm the belonging of Al-Quds to Palestine.

Ministry Announces King's Health 'Improving'

LD2610224895 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Announcement by the Ministry of the Royal Household, Protocol, and Chancellery; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] King Hassan II is still undergoing treatment at the medical center of Cornell New York Hospital. Professor Jim Smith, a respiratory system specialist, is following up on his majesty's health in cooperation with his majesty's doctors. His majesty's state of health is continually improving.

Sudan

Government Comments on U.S. Decision on Embassy

EA2610135095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Oct 95

["Text" of statement issued by the Foreign Ministry "on the U.S. decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to the city of Jerusalem"; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Congress' decision to transfer the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to holy Jerusalem is tangible evidence of their lack of respect not only for Muslim interests but also for Muslim sentiments. It represents moral and material help for Israel's attempt to obliterate the identity of Arab and Muslim Jerusalem, the prophet's abode, the first of the two directions Muslims face during prayer and their third holiest shrine.

This decision is considered a gesture of contempt for all the resolutions of the UN, the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It is nothing but an attempt to appease the Zionist power in the U.S. in order to gain votes during the elections.

This decision casts doubt on the United State's credibility as a mediator in the ongoing attempts at normalization. It is logically unacceptable that it should play the role of a mediator and at the same time adopt stands that negate the rights of one party in the conflict.

Sudan, while condemning this decision, calls on Muslim people and states and the international community to resist and block it by all legal means.

Communications, Health Ministers Return From Iran

EA2610205795 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Uthman 'Abd-al-Qadir 'Abd-al-Latif, minister of roads and communications, and Colonel Galwak Deng, minister of health, returned home today following a one-week official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran at the invitation of their Iranian counterparts.

Colonel Galwak Deng said that the visit was to strengthen the distinguished relations between the two countries, especially in the field of health. He said that an agreement was reached to reactivate the executive programme embodied in the health protocol signed between the two countries. He said that an agreement has been signed with Iranian drug companies to provide large quantities of drugs on concessional terms. They also familiarized themselves with medical progress in Iran.

Meanwhile, the minister of roads and communications said that Iran would contribute toward the implementation of the first phase of the Rabak to al-Jabalayn peace road. It has been agreed in principle to establish two direct communications lines between the two countries and there will be training in the communications sector.

Aid Agencies Warned Against Unauthorized Activities

EA2610182095 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Oct

[FBIS Translated Text] The authorities decided to suspend the operations of some foreign voluntary relief organizations working in the south after they made unauthorized flights and their aircraft landed in rebel areas. Ambassador Inayat 'Abd-al-Hamid, commissioner-general of voluntary work, said that the organizations made mistakes while working in areas other than the areas they had permission to work in. He said they

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had intended to benefit from the budgets for their work in Sudan. He said they gave (?an official) apology to the relevant quarters and have been allowed to resume their work within a framework of respect for the law [word indistinct] of the country which lays down ways in which aid can be provided.

In a statement to the 'Al-Inqadh al-Watani' newspaper published today [25 October], Mr. Inayat said that the voluntary work commission would stop any organizations that carried out activities which had not been agreed upon and it would not allow them to continue their work until they had corrected their mistakes.

He said that there was a tendency to reexamine performance in the Operation Lifeline programme in order to get rid of its shortcomings and introduce mechanisms to make its work in the south and the contact areas more efficient. He said there were 40 voluntary organizations operating in the country after the (?regional) agreement that was signed between the government and the relief organizations, the relevant agencies and UNICEF which implements the Operation Lifeline programme.

The commissioner of voluntary work said that the registration of organizations was aimed at creating a balance in (?critical) circumstances and meeting the country's [word indistinct] [illegible] security requirements, particularly after the appearance of encroachments by some voluntary organizations. The actions of these groups prompted us to be careful and vigilant in order to protect our beliefs and sovereignty, he said.

Government To Set Up Permanent Register of Voters

EA2610204495 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The General Electoral Commission has ordered a re-registration [as heard] of voters in preparation for a permanent register that will form the basis for all future elections beginning with the national assembly elections and the presidential elections.

This was announced today by the chairman of the General Electoral Commission, Mr. 'Abd-al-mun'im al-Nahhas, while briefing journalists. He pointed out that the registration exercise will begin in the next few days.

He said local committees will be established that will be entrusted with the task of (?registration) in [word indistinct] and towns through a census of [words indistinct].

Thereafter it will [word indistinct] its study within four days which would later be submitted to the electoral commission in the [word indistinct].

Western Sahara

Association Denounces New Moroccan 'Oppression'

LD2610234795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2220 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Saharan Prisoners of War and Missing Families Association denounced the new escalation of oppression by the Moroccan occupation authorities in the occupied Saharan territories in anticipation of King Hassan II 's visit to Laayoun scheduled for 6 November.

In a statement given to the Algerian Press Agency, the Association said that the Moroccan forces are carrying out at present a large scale combing campaign inside the Saharan territories and has expelled Saharan citizens suspected of sympathizing with the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro].

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GCC Information Ministers Conclude Meeting

LD2610213495 Riyadh SPA in English 1250 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, Oct 26, SPA — The GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] ministers of information wound up their 7th meeting in Manama on Wednesday [25 October] night.

A statement read before the final session by the GCC Secretary General Dr. Fahim al-Qasimi said the one-day meeting was chaired by the Bahraini Minister of Information Muhammad Ibrahim al-Mutawwa'.

Al-Qasimi said the ministers were received by Shaykh 'Isa Bin- Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain and Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah the prime minister and ministers listened to their wise directives on the best ways to upgrade the GCC information process.

During the meeting, the ministers reviewed the GCC information process and what had been done since their last session. They emphasized the need for intensified contacts between them to cope with the rapid media developments being taken place on regional and international levels and whether such progress could be utilized to highlight the civilized cultural and development achievements accomplished by the six member states. They also cited the importance for close cooperation and coordination to confront the hostile media campaigns.

The GCC ministers of information renewed the unwavering positions of the six states against fundamentalism and terrorism which run counter to the Islamic teachings and agreed that the GCC information means would launch a common campaign of awareness against the alien phenomenon. They also agreed that the media could concentrate on the development projects and give top priority for training aspects to upgrade the abilities of the GCC information cadres.

During the meeting, the ministers reviewed a number of items on the agenda and recommendations made by information undersecretaries during their preparatory meeting in Manama last June on the best ways to cement and maintain closer information ties between the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council. They also reviewed proposals submitted by radio, television and news agencies officials.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers sent cables of thanks and appreciation to Shaykh 'Isa, Prime Minister Khalifah Bin-Salman and Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah the crown prince for their kind patronage of the meeting. They also thanked Bahraini minister of information and other officials for good reception, accommodation and excellent arrangements for the meeting.

Addressing the final session, Minister al-Mutawwa', who chaired the meeting, praised the positive outcome of the meeting and said what has been agreed upon will be a core of a common working program for a well-studied and effective GCC information process.

The Omani Minister of Information 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rawwas also welcomed the resolutions adopted by the meeting and said they will positively reflect on the GCC information process.

Meanwhile, Dr. Fu'ad 'Abd-al-Salam al-Farisi, the Saudi minister of information termed the meeting as one of the most successful gatherings held by the GCC information ministers. Al-Farisi, who made the remarks in a press statement at the end of the meeting, said the meeting was very successful and fruitful as it was characterized with love, frankness, objectivism and good-will.

He also highlighted the excellent arrangements made by the Bahraini officials for the meeting.

One of the most important resolutions of the meeting is the sincere desire expressed by the ministers to cement information cooperation and to stand in one trench to repulse any hostile campaign that might be launched against any of the member states, Dr. al-Farisi said.

Dr. al-Farisi left Manama last night and was seen off the Bahraini Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Information Muhammad Al-Mutawwa' and many senior officials.

Qatar

Doha Meeting on Arab-Iranian Dialogue Viewed

95LH0280A Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 19 Sep 95 p 9

[Article by Fahmi Huwaydi: "A 'Peace of the Brave' With Iran?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At one of the sessions of the Conference on Arab-Iranian Dialogue, I heard Ambassador 'Adnan 'Imran, head of the Arab League's political agency, ask those sitting next to him, "Have any of you found out why the Iraq-Iran war started?" The question was asked not so much to find out as to draw attention to the amount of futility hovering over Arab-Iranian relations. This futility has continued to the present time. It became visible in several scenes that emerged during last week's meeting of Arab and Iranian intellectuals in Doha, the capital of Qatar.

The fact that it was the first such meeting since the triumph of Iran's Islamic revolution 16 years ago was

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an indication of this futility. Just as Ambassador 'Imran has not yet found any valid reason for the insane war that burned the two countries in its flames for eight years, some of the intellectuals expressed amazement at the estrangement they had practiced. Each had been following the other and writing about him from a distance. Yes, everyone was aware that there were political disagreements between the two sides, but the question the conference raised was how long culture and economy should continue to be attached to politics. Why does political divorce in our third world entail cultural feuding and the sacrifice of economic interests?

The hotel in which the conference was held illustrated this futility in another way. A little while earlier it had witnessed a meeting—also unprecedented—of one of the committees in which Arabs and Israelis participate. That event seemed to express the amount of progress and achievement being made in the area of Arab-Israeli relations despite the bloody record of hatred that governed relations between the two sides for nearly half a century. As all know, that record has not prevented dialogue, peacemaking, and a start on the way toward normalization.

The participants in the Arab-Iranian dialogue—about 75 persons, including 20 Iranians—stood on the same stage and began writing the first lines of the discourse of normalization between the Arab and Iranian nations. The bitter and futile question being asked was whether the normalization process with the Iranian brother could move ahead as fast as normalization with the Israeli foe.

The papers expressed this futility in one way or another. They recorded how the two Gulf wars (the first, against Iran, and the second, after the occupation of Kuwait—I heard one Iraqi call it the Iraq-U.S. war) had caused more than $1 trillion in destruction and devastation.

One paper quoted IMF information that the "accomplishments" of the second war included: loss of 4 percent of the gross domestic product of the entire Middle East region, a 2.5-percent increase in inflation rates, and a shift in the region's current account from a $10 billion surplus to a $43 billion deficit—in addition to more than $600 billion in losses as a direct result.

Another bit of stunning information repeated in the papers was that the Gulf Cooperation Council countries had bought $82.5 billion in weapons between 1986 and 1993—equal to 31 percent of all arms sales in the world!

A neighbor who could not believe his ears said to me, "Imagine what the state of the Arab nation might be if these billions had been spent on development and people's welfare!"

In that context I remembered other figures indicating that, of the approximately 20 million barrels of oil a day the OPEC countries produce, 17 million are produced in the Middle East, 15 million of which are exported. If the Arabs and the Iranians could coordinate to raise the price of oil by only $1, it would raise oil revenues in the region by more than $5 billion a year. Stunning information! It makes one ask why the two sides have been unable to coordinate when the return would be so tremendously large.

Crisis of Trust

The discussions almost slipped into futility on several occasions when they approached the subject of history and its legacy. The roots of relations between the Arabs and the West before and after Islam were discussed. It is a subject that can be harnessed for all outlooks and all degrees of hostility or friendship, because history is by nature ambiguous, especially when it is long and complicated. You can draw whatever lessons or significance you want from it, depending on your purpose and intention. The reasonable minds succeeded in circumscribing the subject and dousing the flames. One of them said, "We are not responsible for a history we did not participate in making." Another drew everyone's attention to how Europe, whose history was full of episodes of conflict and hatred much worse than anything between the Arabs and Persians, had now succeeded in establishing a model of concord and unity such as the Arabs have not realized among themselves.

Even the general atmosphere of the dialogue did not lack signs of futility. The two sides exchanged misgivings, irritations, and feelings of alienation. In other words, mutual trust is not present yet. In any event, it was understandable since each side brought a different memory, sometimes fearful and cautious. Most of the Iranian group seemed very sensitive about any criticism of the Islamic revolution. Although each participant was attending as a private individual, not in an official capacity, whenever any Arab voiced such criticism, more than one person would take up the gauntlet against him to defend the official line and affirm its correctness and achievements.

Some of the Arabs, in turn, busied themselves scrutinizing every word the Iranians said, ready out of misgiving and prejudice to interpret every phrase in the worst sense.

A group of ultranationalists played a part in this, along with some Iraqi academics from the universities of Baghdad and Mosul. Some of them seemed not yet to have emerged from the decade of war with Iran. The leaders of this minority of Arabs left the conference as

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they had arrived, seeing nothing in common with the Persians and rejecting any understanding or agreement with them. One ultranationalist expressed his feelings in the closing session, launching a sharp attack on the Iranians in a way that violated the spirit of dialogue and the purpose of the conference. It led Dr. Khayr-al-Din Hasib, director of the Center for Studies of Arabic Unity, to apologize publicly to the Iranians for what had happened. The broad disapproval with which the attack was received was a clear sign that the conference had succeeded in creating a real desire on the part of the majority to continue the joint dialogue.

It was evident from the dialogue that most of the Iranians were well informed about political and cultural developments in the Arab world. The opposite was not true. A sizable number of the Arab participants seemed unaware of Iran's political, social, and cultural landscape. They asked about elementary points and were surprised by the facts when they were directly cited by Iranian men and women. Some of the Arabs saw Iran through Western eyes and interests, so that at one of the sessions they criticized its arming itself and its nuclear program. In reply, an Iranian scholar, speaking fluent Arabic, said, "How you bewilder us, gentlemen! You criticize the revolution's slogan and oath. You exhort us to pay attention to the model that the revolution put forward. Yet, when we go beyond the stage of slogans and enter the phase of building the model state, you still do not stop criticizing us."

He added that he understood that Israel would be upset by Iran's arming itself and that this would be reflected in U.S. language. What he did not understand was what was raising the wrath of some of the Arabs about it.

Such was the atmosphere in which the conference was held. It was sponsored by the Center for Arab Unity Studies in Beirut and Qatar University (for the Arab side) and by the Center for Scientific Studies and Middle East Affairs in Tehran (for the Iranian side).

The question of why the conferees met is irrelevant because, from the very beginning of preparation for the conference over a year ago, the sponsors acted on the assumption that the main thing was to meet and not be cut off. Not only are there cultural, religious, and historical ties between Arabs and Iranians, there are strategic, political, and economic interests that necessitate a meeting between the Arabs and the neighboring states that represent the strategic hinterland of the Arab world. The Center for Arab Unity Studies had organized an earlier conference on Arab-Turkish dialogue. While that was the basis and foundation, another circumstance recently witnessed by the Middle East made the Arab-Iranian meeting a pressing necessity: namely, the new maps of the Middle East region being drawn under the so-called new regional order. These maps minimize or ignore the importance of the Arab and Iranian homeland. [passage omitted]

History and Geography

Perhaps the Iranian question was how the dialogue went and what happened during the four days of the conference.

You can imagine how many subjects might be raised at such a meeting 16 years overdue. I would not be exaggerating to say that the discussions dealt with history, geography, economics, politics, security, women and society, and the Kurdish and Palestinian issues. I think they covered the most important outstanding issues between the Arabs and Iranians. It was clear that the conference had not been called to decide any particular issue; it merely aimed at extending bridges of dialogue between the two sides and reviewing the opinions and impressions of intellectuals on both sides. I even said at the closing session that what had been discussed at the conference was a possible agenda for other future meetings, as most of the subjects that had been raised for discussion required a conference of their own to give them the study they deserved so that the participants could come out with a clear consensus. That applied to the following subjects, each of which was discussed at a single session of two hours at best: historic relations between Arabs and Iranians; mutual perceptions of each side; economic relations between Arabs and Iran; how such relations might be developed; the image that Arabs and Iranians have of each other in their textbooks; civil society here and there; border and regional disputes between the Arabs and Iranians; the Kurdish problem and the position of the two sides on it; the Palestinian problem; international relations of the Arab and Iranian domains and the sensitivity of international interests to them; the proposal for a Middle Eastern system, the position of Arabs and Iranians toward it, and their position in it; and the position of Arab-Iranian relations in the context of the Islamic world.

Each of these subjects was discussed from the Arab and Iranian points of view. The conferees listened to the points of view presented by two presenters and at least the same number of discussants. Most of the Arabs relaxed and expressed their opinions frankly, not hesitating to engage in self-criticism regarding various Arab conditions. The Iranians were more cautious. As a rule they did not engage in any criticism of Iranian discourse, despite the fact that they did not speak a single language and that nationalistic, Islamic, and Western orientations were visible among them. What

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they did not disagree on was the position of defending the Islamic revolution and its achievements.

Not unexpectedly, the issue of borders, especially the subject of the three Gulf islands (Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb), absorbed much of the conference's attention and a generous share of the discussion, and thus of tension and touchiness. Aware of this, the Iranians had included in their team one of their experts who we learned had been working on the issue of the islands for 24 years and had written a book on the subject. He was the author of the paper that presented the Iranian point of view. He was Dr. Piruz Mojtahedzadeh, professor at London University. The Iranian delegation included another expert who had been brought from the United States: Dr. Mohsen Milani, professor of international relations at South Florida University. Two Arabic papers were presented on the subject: one about the three Gulf islands by Dr. Shamlan al-'Isa of the Department of Political Science at Kuwait University; the second about the border disputes between Iraq and Iran by Dr. Sayyar al-Jamil, professor of history at Mosul University. The subject of borders with Iraq is less important because there is an agreement fixing them which the Baghdad government signed, repudiated, and then adhered to again. The issue of the three islands remains thorny to the present. The Iranians considered the islands to be subject to their sovereignty. Dr. Milani saw them as constituting one of the most import issues of national consensus in Iran. The Arabs spoke about Iranian occupation and their own right to regain the islands.

Can the Crisis Be Defused?

No one, of course, expected the problem to be resolved, for it was immediately apparent that there was no common ground between the two sides regarding any point in the matter. However, one of the Iranians said in an off-the-record conversation that the problem had to be defused. He said that the Iranians thought there was no room for discussing Greater and Lesser Tunb and that, when Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan of the Emirates sent a letter to the Iranian president on the subject, he had spoken only about Abu Musa Island. He then said that there was an opportunity to talk about Abu Musa because there was an agreement about it between Iran and the ruler of al-Shariqah, but that now an agreement about it had to be concluded with the Emirates, of which al-Shariqah had become part.

Although no one budged from his position at the public sessions, it was possible to agree on three matters: first, that force should be ruled out from possible solutions to the conflict. One of the speakers said that war on the issue should be the object of definitive prohibition. Second, building bridges of confidence and keeping out intruders and Western parties, especially those who always try to muddy the atmosphere and impede agreement, would tend to provide a favorable opportunity to bring points of view on the subject closer together.

The third point was that there was nothing to be gained from keeping the subject in abeyance and that it was necessary to move in a real way toward a peaceful solution. Proposals included mediation, arbitration, and the International Court of Justice.

At the final session, the question of how Arab-Iranian relations could be improved was raised. The most important answer was the need for continued rounds of dialogue to widen the scope of agreement and correct mutual perceptions. Some called for the establishment of an institutional entity to organize continuing dialogue and the creation of a permanent secretariat for Arab-Iranian dialogue. There were calls for exchanges of professors, wider teaching of Persian and Arabic, and translation of books between the languages. There was a proposal to organize a conference to discuss possibilities for economic cooperation between the two sides, with agreement on giving priority in joint action to culture and economic relations. One participant proposed creating an Arab-Iranian friendship society, and there were also other proposals expressing evident enthusiasm for extending bridges and for avoiding political obstacles and the more complex and sensitive accounts. [passage omitted]

As we were leaving the final session, one of the Iranians asked me when a "peace of the brave" might be concluded with Iran. Since I could not answer, I could only record the question. Perhaps someone else can answer it.

Saudi Arabia

Mosque Bomber Located by Security, Commits Suicide

LD2610195295 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Statement by "a responsible source at the Interior Ministry"; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following a previous Interior Ministry statement on 20 October that 'Abdallah Bin-Muhammad Bin-Sa'd al-'Amri threw an explosive device at worshippers at al-Qawba' mosque in the Bishah region while they were performing Friday prayers and then escaped to an unknown destination, it is reported that on the afternoon of 26 October security forces pursuing the aggressor were able to locate and encircle him

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in Wadi al-Taj in the province of al-Namas, which is a wadi situated in a rugged mountainous area.

The security forces asked him to surrender and gave him assurances. However, he opened fire on them with a rifle, which forced the security forces to throw a gas bomb at his location and march toward him. When he realized they were close, he blew himself up using a bomb of the same type he used in his attack on the mosque. Consequently, he died immediately.

We would like to note that while the security forces were moving toward the perpetrator, a stray bullet fired by one of the members of the force killed one of his colleagues. We pray for God's forgiveness and mercy for the officer killed and patience and solace for his family.

King Fahd Assured of Good Health of Moroccan King

LD2610193495 Riyadh SPA in English
1237 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, Oct 26, SPA — Custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz made a telephone call with King Hassan II of Morocco on Wednesday [25 October] night.

During the telephone conversation, King Fahd received assurance on the good health of King Hassan II who felt illness while In New York. King Fahd wished for the Moroccan monarch quick recovery.

For his part, Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the deputy premier and commander of the National Guard also made a similar telephone conversation with King Hassan II.

Yemen

U.S. Embassy Decision Causes 'Extreme Concern'

JN2610162395 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Republic of Yemen has expressed extreme concern over the U.S. Congress' decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem [words indistinct]. This was stated by brother Ghalib 'Ali al-Amin, under secretary of the Foreign Ministry. In a statement to the YEMENI NEWS AGENCY, SABA', he explained that the Republic of Yemen regards such a move as an obstacle to the peace efforts in the region and a provocation to the feelings of the Arab and Islamic nation.

Authorities Order Expulsion of All Algerians

NC2610153995 Paris AFP in English
1438 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, Oct 26 (AFP) — Yemeni authorities have ordered the expulsion of hundreds of Algerians following the arrest last month of an Islamic militant implicated in armed attacks, security services said Thursday [26 October].

"Algerian nationals are being expelled from the country without exception following the arrest of the Algerian extremist Adem Salaheddin," who will stand trial soon for crimes and sedition, a security source said.

The expulsions affect Algerians with proper residence visas as well as those without such documents, an Arab diplomat said. Around 300 Algerians work in Yemen, most of them teachers, he added.

Salaheddin, an Algerian preacher who was hired as a teacher, entered Yemen after the civil war in May-July last year. He gave up teaching to head a group of fundamentalists who carried out attacks in late September in Dalih, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the southern city of Aden.

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Paper Calls For 'Jihad' To 'Liberate' Jerusalem

JN2710102395 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0850 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 27 Oct (INA) — AL-THAWRAH asserts that the U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem did not surprise any Arab who is aware of the nature and scope of the U.S. alliance with the Zionist entity. In an article today, the newspaper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says this decision represents extreme U.S. disregard for the feelings, interests, and historical rights of Arabs and Muslims.

The paper adds: The new U.S. decision is a living example of political arrogance and a supercilious and aggressive policy. This decision also shows complete disregard for international law and UN and Security Council resolutions, which assert that Jerusalem is an occupied Arab city.

AL-THAWRAH goes on: This measure is fresh evidence that the United States does not respect any pledge or law and that it would not hesitate to scorn world unanimity, after it found that international authority is prepared to serve its interests and those of its protege "Israel."

The paper stresses that the Congress decision disregards international legitimacy and represents the essence of U.S. policy which is based on selectivity and the blatant use of double standards. This U.S. conduct shows the false claims of the United States toward the countries that oppose its aggressive policies. The United States claims that it is concerned with the implementation of Security Council resolutions. [passage omitted]

The paper adds: The belief that preserving the Arab and Islamic character of Jerusalem is done by the money allocated by certain people to construct the holy sites is an obvious evasion of the pan-Arab and religious duty to preserve the first of two qiblahs and the third holiest mosque.

AL-THAWRAH concludes that preserving Jerusalem can only be done through a jihad to liberate it from Zionist desecration. This objective can never be achieved by overlooking what the United States is doing today. The United States is fragmenting the nation, consolidating the enemy's power, confirming its alliance with it, and promoting its aggressive bent.

BABIL Critical of U.S. Bill on Embassy Transfer

JN2610135295 Baghdad INA in English
1200 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Oct 26, INA — The Iraqi BABIL daily issued today an article for [as received] an Iraqi political writer in which he confirmed that the American Congress decision contradicts all the UN Security Council's and the UN General Assembly's resolutions which affirm that the northern [as received] Quds [Jerusalem] is occupied and that the Zionist entity is committed to withdraw from it.

The writer added that with such decision, the American Administration assures its double-standard and selection policy in dealing with the UN Security Council's and the UN General Assembly's resolutions. He further explained that holding on to the international legitimacy is not but a pressure being practiced by the American Administration against certain states to protect its interests.

The writer stressed that the reply should not be limited to rejection or feeling sorry or even issuing statements, but it is important to get America to realize that its strategic interests are in real danger and that it may lose hold of the oil sources in the region.

Saddam Reportedly Restricts Travel by Top Officials

NC2610194695 Paris AFP in English
1900 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Oct 26 (AFP) — Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has imposed stringent curbs on foreign travel by his top officials out of fear of more defections, the opposition in exile said Thursday [26 October].

"Ministers and deputy ministers as well as members of the leadership of the ruling Ba'th party can no longer travel without prior authorization from the dictator Saddam Husayn," the Iraqi National Congress [INC] said. The INC, an umbrella organisation based in London, said the ban also applied to members of parliament.

Only Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, Foreign Minister Mohammad al-Sahhaf and Commerce Minister [title as received] Muhammad Mahdi Salih were exempted, the opposition said in a statement sent to Nicosia.

Saddam's son-in-law and the chief of Iraq's armaments programmes, General Husayn Kamil Hasan [al-Majid], defected to Jordan in August. The opposition says several other top officials and army officers have also fled abroad in past months.

Iraq, hit by crippling UN sanctions since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, already restricts travel by professionals such as engineers and doctors to curb a brain drain.

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An exit visa for travel abroad now costs 200,000 dinars (80 dollars on the black market) a person, compared to an average monthly wage of between 5,000 and 6,000 dinars. The only outlet is the road to Amman because the sanctions cover air flights.

Presidential Guard Officers Congratulate Saddam

JN2610190995 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1820 GMT 23 Oct 95

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the midst of our great people's celebrations of leader President Saddam Husayn's — may God protect him — winning of the post of the president of the republic, the supervisor of the Presidential Guard affairs and Presidential Guard commanders offered their congratulations to his excellency.

The event was attended by Staff General 'Izzat Ibrahim, the deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

The congratulators wished his excellency long life to lead our people to the shores of happiness and security.

Ministry Denounces UK's Expulsion of Iraqi

JN2610162095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1254 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Oct (INA)—The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Iraq has denounced the atypical methods that have nothing to do with the most basic rules governing dealings among countries that the UK authorities adopted when they decided to deport an employee at the Iraqi interests section in the United Kingdom.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman told INA that a British intelligence officer accosted Khamis al-'Ujayli, administrative employee at the Iraqi interests section in the United Kingdom on 23 October. He showed him his identity card and impudently asked him to cooperate with British intelligence against his country. He told him that if he refused, he would falsely accuse him of carrying out illegal activities. The honorable Iraqi employee, Khamis al-'Ujayli, scolded the frustrated British intelligence officer, ridiculed his malicious attempt, and told him he would inform the officials in charge of the Iraqi interests section in London so that they, in turn, would lodge a complaint against the behavior of the British intelligence.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman added that the British Foreign Office informed the media on 25 October 1995 that it had decided to consider the Iraqi employee persona non grata and that he has until 31 October 1995 to leave the United Kingdom without giving the official in charge of the Iraqi interests section the opportunity to categorically deny these false claims and accusations.

The spokesman said that the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Iraq denounces these atypical methods which have nothing to do with the most basic rules governing dealings among countries and is astonished at the British Foreign Office's measures on deporting Khamis al-'Ujayli, employee at the Iraqi interests section in London.

Concluding his statement, the spokesman said that the British authorities, in accordance with the rules of sound dealings, should have banned the British intelligence officer from harassing a junior administrative employee in the Iraqi interests section. However, it seems that the British authorities, which were greatly dismayed at the genuine national feelings with which the Iraqi employee confronted the frustrated British intelligence officer, decided to deport him on the basis of false accusations to which they resorted to cover up for the British intelligence officer's failure to attain his malicious objective.

Columnist Hails Saddam, Castigates Americans

JN2610150795 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 17 Oct 95 pp 1,2

["Viewpoint" column by Chief Editor Salah al-Mukhtar: "Iraq Triumphs, Saddam Husayn Marches On, and the United States Is Defeated"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This is Iraq, the diamond of a universe whose steel caves in under its weight. But not the diamond. It remains solid and sparkling and becomes even brighter under fire and stronger under pressure. Have you heard anything stronger than diamond? Certainly not. Diamond is the strongest material, which is known for its purity and solidity. The Iraqis are the universe's most pure and solid diamond. History has not said anything other than that. Our people from Sumer to Acadia, great Babylon, and Baghdad of Saddam Husayn, who is supported by God and the people, have been leaders, flag bearers, men of conscience, and armies which are ready for martyrdom. They have shouldered what others could not. They have given their eyes to mankind so it can see the light. They have sacrificed their youths and the most precious thing in the world, which is life, so that justice will prevail.

Have you heard of anyone other than the Iraqis defeating the goddess of evil and the earth's cruel tyrants, who are not satisfied with killing hundreds, but thousands of people? Do you remember the invasions of the Tartars and the savage rodents who pounded the fortresses of civilization in Iraq and annihilated hundreds of

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thousands of Iraqis to stop the worship of God in Iraqi places of worship? Indeed, you remember them and saw what happened to them. After the burning of Baghdad, the people of Iraq bandaged their wounds and rose up anew, and the disaster became a reminder for the sources and faces of evil.

Yesterday, with the solidity of the unique Iraqi diamond, we told the earth's barbaric rodents coming from the continent of AIDS and murder that we do not accept anyone other than Saddam as leader, even if they grant us the sun and the moon, gouge out the eyes, burn the trees, and starve 20 million Iraqis. Iraq is an eternal bird, whose immortality is God's will and whose ascendance is a heavenly will that supersedes fate.

We told the empire of evil and death that we are people who cannot be subjected to death, and therefore, cannot bow. You the representatives of the United States, you filthy rodents, which have escaped from the earth's prisons and exiles, bow to the one who slaps you, and sell your honor, word, and sword, to the one who pays you. Therefore, you will not understand this great Iraqi who defies your tyranny whenever you plunge another dagger in his heart. The heart is not killed by the stab of a dagger, but by the injury of honor and pride. No one among us wants his heart beating while his great spirit is injured. Perhaps, the greatest injury done to our spirit is when we are asked to bow to the tyrants, retreat before them, and sing their songs, to which we have turned a deaf ear for decades, because they are the songs of slavery, evil, and bondage.

With the spirit of crime overwhelming, like flies, the face of an old witch with evil aims and feelings called Mad Albright—a name reflecting her true spirit—you said: The Iraqi people must bow and accept U.S. colonization of their precious great homeland, and that the initial step must be abandoning Saddam Husayn. You thought that the suffering due to the blockade would make the Iraqi compromise his honor, dignity, and the future of his sons with another piece of bread. You took your example, because you are a people without history and high values who submit to the low values of animals. But, the referendum held two days ago shook up your sick souls, and made you even more mad and hysterical.

Every Iraqi stood up to say "yes" to Saddam Husayn. Even children, who did not have the right to vote, insisted on saying "yes, Uncle Saddam," because they are under no illusion that if, God forbid, U.S. dictatorship comes to Iraq it would deliberately annihilate Iraqi children after a long torture.

Let Mad Albright ask the American and European correspondents who came to Baghdad and witnessed what astonished them and made them incapable of closing their yes and freezing their conscience. Let her ask them about their impressions. They witnessed the Iraqi people's sincere enthusiasm for their brave leader. They witnessed with their minds, eyes, and hearts that the Iraqi people hold great affection for their leader. The people who rushed to the ballot boxes in millions and with such unusual enthusiasm despite the hunger and complex transport problems were not responding to any orders. It was a spontaneous reaction which could be seen in their eyes and smiles of pride as well as in the word "yes" which was written in blood.

More than one American and European have asked me: What is the secret of this unusual enthusiasm and insistence on electing Saddam Husayn despite the blockade and the suffering? I read in the faces of these Americans thousands of questions about the secret of the Iraqi miracle and the attitudes of their governments toward Iraq and whether they were sound. There were also questions of conscience which cannot remain unanswered while they see their governments committing unprecedented crimes against the Iraqi people simply because they respect themselves, stick to their convictions, want freedom for their homeland, and do not want to fall into any imperialist trap.

All guests who attended the referendum, even those who are hostile to Iraq, were astonished by what they saw. They lost all sense of argument and were at a loss for words as they asked us: What is the secret of these people? In this referendum, 600 journalists and correspondents from all parts of the world stood motionless before the Iraqi argument and logic. What they witnessed was the enthusiasm of the free Iraqi people; women, men, old people, and even the disabled who insisted on coming in their wheelchairs! Perhaps, what astonished most were the youths, women, and old people who wrote the words "yes to Saddam Husayn" in blood. This was also viewed by millions of people on television screens.

We told our guests: These are the Iraqis who, after five years of the most tortuous conditions faced by any people, tell you no and a thousand times no when they insist on sticking to Saddam Husayn's leadership. This is because every Iraqi knows that Iraq without Saddam Husayn would be an open ranch for hungry and voracious wolves. What you saw was a spontaneous expression of the Iraqi spirit which does not succumb to your terrorism, O Americans. We cannot order anyone to love, laugh, and be happy. Here you see great joy and love in the faces of the Iraqis despite the suffering caused by the blockade. Ask anyone and the answer from every Iraqi home will be: We are one family. We may differ on some of the affairs of the Iraqi house, but

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when it comes to Iraq's honor, future, and symbol, we are united, because we are a diamond whose solidity is unmatched in the whole of the universe.

This is Iraq. It is the most solid diamond in the universe. In the heart of this diamond, Saddam Husayn's picture is planted. Neither the United States nor any other power in the universe can change him, coerce his people, twist their arm, or hurt their dignity. Despite the harsh years of the criminal blockade, and the U.S. annihilation of one million Iraqi civilians in order to make the Iraqis accept imperialism and abandon the symbol of their national honor, Saddam Husayn, the unanimous free and spontaneous answer comes as: Yes to Saddam Husayn.

We took a new big step yesterday in further solidifying the Iraqi diamond. Without this step, we will not be able to break the blockade and defeat the remaining criminal U.S. plans. The blockade can only be lifted with the Iraqi people's will, which alone will provide the natural environment for the emergence of a courageous stand by those states which are still hesitant. Moreover, the Iraqi people's will alone will force the Americans, enemies of mankind, to submit or face the humiliation of another defeat, whose shame will be greater than that of the Vietnam defeat.

O Iraqis, you have proved once again that you are the most dynamic, honorable, powerful, and far-sighted people on earth. By your decision yesterday, you have shortened the duration of the blockade and convinced the United States and the hesitant in the world that there is no escape from the recognition that Saddam Husayn is Iraq, and Iraq is Saddam Husayn. Anything else is a delusion and whoever continues to hold to it may as well dig his grave as of now in order to bury his shame and his country's big interests, because the Iraqi diamond will shatter the blockade soon and the Iraqi people will restore their important status in the equation, without which there will be no mathematics; and become a cornerstone, without which no building in the world will be erected.

Today, O Iraqis, you said: Yes to the future and yes to a happy Iraqi childhood, peaceful old age, reassured motherhood, a strong united Iraq, a prosperity which has gone but will definitely return, and the freedom of a people who have sought life, and destiny has responded obligingly and condescendingly.

Today, you told your Arab brothers, despite the treachery and treason of those who smiled to Iraq and the attempts of those scabby foxes which infiltrated into Iraq under the shadow of the rabid American wolves in order to devour the eyes of its children, that Iraq is still the diamond of all the Arabs which carries the weight of their sorrows and pains, because every Iraqi knows very well, just as every American war criminal also knows, that the liberation of Iraq from the chains of the blockade soon will be the inevitable beginning of the liberation of the rest of the Arabs and the return of the spirit to the nation.

What is left to be said today? We will not forget to affirm the boundless love that fills our hearts and souls for our beloved leader and brother, the symbol of our dignity, and the guarantee of our unity, Saddam Husayn. We said yes not only because we love true democracy, but aboveall because saying yes to Saddam Husayn expresses our love for Iraq and our concern for its future and unity as well as our respect for one of the most important Iraqi characteristic; namely, the more the enemies of the Arabs and Muslims plot against our leader, the more attached we get to him. That is a question of dignity and pride, in addition to being the question of a homeland and freedom.

Long live Iraq. Long live Saddam Husayn. Shame to the American war criminals.

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Peres on Christopher's Upcoming Damascus Visit

TA2710073895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 27 Oct 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Me'ir Einstein on 27 October; place not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Einstein] Good morning, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

[Peres] A very good morning to you.

[Einstein] Do you think Christopher's upcoming visit to Damascus may lead to the resumption of negotiations with the Syrians?

[Peres] I am not overly optimistic, but it is worth a try. Look, al-Asad is quite isolated, although we must not forget that he finds an advantage in his isolation: As long as he stands alone, he can keep Lebanon without being criticized for it by the Arab world. Lebanon is in fact occupied by Syria today. If he embarks on the path of peace, he may encounter problems. On the other hand, the world is moving on: There are developments, promises, successes. It must feel lonely staying behind like a forgotten warrior in reserve.

[Einstein] Did Christopher's decision to meet al-Asad in Damascus surprise you?

[Peres] No. It will be a brief visit, designed to keep the negotiations on a back burner at least. No one expects a breakthrough, but even in the absence of one, no one wants to discontinue the process altogether. Options should be left open.

[Einstein] Mr. Peres, you will be attending the economic conference in Amman, and Christopher will be there too, before he departs for Damascus. Will you meet?

[Peres] Yes. I think the prime minister, Christopher, and I will hold a three-way meeting. [passage omitted]

[Einstein] During your meeting in Amman, will you and the prime minister ask the secretary of state to bring up the Syrian involvement in Lebanon during his encounter with President al-Asad in Damascus?

[Peres] We definitely will. The Syrians seem to have lifted the restrictions on the 10 rejectionist organizations that are still in Syria. According to one report, the Syrians even provided them with funds. The Syrians had the chutzpah to propose that the EU view terrorist activities as a liberation war! There are all kinds of wars of liberation; a dictatorship also calls for an act of liberation. There are all sorts of things in the world. This chutzpah — defining terror, the murder of women and children, as a war of liberation — shows again how far removed Syria is, politically, from global trends.

[Einstein] You said you do not have great expectations from Christopher's trip to Damascus as regards the resumption of the talks. Do you anticipate that it will generate a change in the Syrian involvement in Lebanon?

[Peres] I have a different interpretation of the Syrian attacks on us and on the United States. These attacks are not of a kind that seeks to end a process. I think Syria still wants to keep some bridges, and Syria will have to decide what it wants. In this sense, it is a good visit: It will provide the peace process with maintenance [preceding word in English].

[Einstein] Thank you very much, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

Rabin: No Formula Found in U.S. for Syrian Talks

TA2610192595 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin returned to Israel this evening at the end of his visit to the United States. In their meeting last night, Clinton and Rabin failed to find a formula enabling the resumption of the direct contacts between Israel and Syria. Our Washington correspondent Ya'aqov Ahime'ir reports that a long time will apparently elapse before U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher embarks on a shuttle mission or the Israeli and Syrian ambassadors in Washington resume their talks. [passage omitted]

Rabin: Syria Provides Asylum to Hamas Fugitives

TA2610171595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin accused Syria of providing asylum to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members who are forced to flee other countries. Damascus has become a safe haven for persecuted Hamas members, Rabin said in his meeting yesterday with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington.

Speaking to our correspondent Hayim Zissowitz, sources in Washington estimated that only in a few weeks will it be possible to tell whether the attempted dialogue with the Syrians can be resumed.

Rabinovich Notes 'Hostile' Syrian Stand

TA2710065395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will meet with President al-Asad in

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Damascus after the Amman Economic Conference next week. Our correspondent in Washington Hayim Zisrowitz notes that Christopher will not launch a shuttle tour and will not come to Jerusalem following his Damascus visit.

Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, says the Damascus visit does not attest to a change in the Syrian stands on the negotiations with Israel. Ambassador Rabinovich believes the visit is part of a working process in which the Americans are trying to ascertain whether Christopher's Damascus-Jerusalem shuttle tours can be resumed. The ambassador says it will be several weeks before we can tell whether the Americans are able to resume the mediation. Itamar Rabinovich notes that the present Syrian stance is intransigent, hostile, and devoid of any flexibility.

Our Arab affairs correspondent Arye Gus reports that Syria confirmed this morning that Secretary Christopher will be visiting Damascus.

Our correspondent reports that Israel is demanding that Syria expel members of terrorist organizations from its territory and remove its armed forces from Lebanon. The Israeli demands are to be included in the summing-up declaration at next month's Economic Cooperation Conference of European and Mediterranean Countries, which will be held in Barcelona. Israel decided to make the demand after Syria had put forward its own demands calling for Israel to leave all occupied territory and had termed Hizballah members freedom fighters.

Rabin Indignant Over EU Orient House Visit

TA2710093695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin conveyed his indignation to members of the EU troika over their plans to visit Orient House in Jerusalem. The prime minister told the three officials that according to the agreement with the Palestinians political talks with them should be held only within the boundaries of the Palestinian Authority.

Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that the Spanish foreign minister and the deputy foreign ministers of Italy and France took part in the meeting on behalf of the European troika, while Ministers Beilin and Harish participated alongside the prime minister.

In the meeting the prime minister also criticized Syria's support for Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad.

Foreign Officials Asked Not To Visit Orient House

TA2610153295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Government asks that foreign officials not visit Orient House or pay only courtesy visits to it. This announcement was contained in Assistant State Attorney Nili Arad's response to the appeal filed by Betzedeq [right-wing human rights organization] against the activities of Palestinian Authority institutions on Israeli territory. Arad said the government takes care to enforce the law banning such activities on the basis of its understanding and policy. This is reported by our correspondent Mira Amsalem.

Beilin: Nation To Take 'Lower Profile' at Summit

TA2610112895 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Oct 95 p 12

[Report by David Makovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel will take a lower profile at next week's Amman economic conference than it did at last year's summit in Casablanca to allay Arab fears it seeks to dominate the region, Economics Minister Yosi Beilin indicated yesterday.

"This year we are sending fewer people than we did last year — 60 businessmen and 40 members of government," Beilin, who is coordinating Israeli participation at the parley, told reporters yesterday.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is planning to only spend half a day in Amman at the opening on Sunday [29 October] before returning. The conference concludes on Tuesday.

Israel dispatched two planeloads of officials and businessmen to Casablanca, leading to complaints by Arabs, particularly the Egyptians, that it was eager to economically control the region.

Beilin hoped Egypt would have the largest delegation in Amman. "We heard the Arab complaints about Casablanca, but I must say I thought they exaggerated, since we have something to contribute in building up this region."

Frederic Sicre, of the Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF) member, which is coordinating the summit, said last month that "we want a very business driven agenda in Amman. We are not trying to force the peace process.... Economic bridges can be built faster than political ones."

While the summit is devoted to private sector projects, Beilin said he foresees a few projects in which Israel and Arab governments can join together, perhaps with

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private sector involvement. He said if planned properly, Israel and the Arab states could reach agreement on a few projects in Amman, then present them in a united fashion at the European Union (EU) conference in Barcelona on November 28.

The Barcelona conference is expected to discuss EU allocation of more than $6 billion to 11 Mediterranean states over a five-year period.

WEF officials have made it absolutely clear that a Middle East development bank would not be discussed in Amman, apparently due to heated opposition by European and Gulf states.

In contrast, Beilin insisted the idea of "some form of commercial bank," which would be based in Cairo, is still alive, but will only be discussed further after the summit.

Both Egypt and Qatar have expressed interest in hosting the regional economic summit next year. Sicre has said he hopes next year's meeting will be held in the Gulf.

About 1,000 business and political leaders are expected to attend the Amman conference, the biggest international event Jordan has ever hosted.

Cuban Minister Hopes To Resume Relations 'Soon'

TA2710085095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Cuban minister told Minister Sulamit Aloni that he hopes his country will soon resume relations with Israel. The statement was made by the Cuban culture minister at a meeting with the minister of science and the arts at the UNESCO conference in Paris. Our correspondent Ya'el Ben-Yehuda reports that when Minister Aloni addressed the conference plenum last night the representatives of Iran and Libya walked out of the hall.

Police Remove Settlers From Hadagan Hill

TA2610171395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] A large contingent of Israeli police this afternoon cleared the settler encampment on Hadagan Hill near Efrat. The three dozen or so protesters, some of whom had chained themselves together, were carried to waiting buses. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 26 October adds that "the police have released the 29 settlers who were detained for questioning in the course of their evacuation from Hadagan Hill. Our correspondent Gil Litman notes that most of them were women."]

Navy Sees Aegean as Next Theater of Operations

TA2410121295 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Oct 95 p 2

[Report by Alon Pinkas]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the foreseeable future, the navy may have to patrol Israel's commercial maritime routes, thus rendering the Aegean Sea the next possible theater of operations, OC Navy Adm. 'Ami Ayalon said yesterday.

Speaking with reporters on board the new EILAT Saar-5 missile boat, with Gaza City visible in the distance, Ayalon said hostile North African navies may try to hinder maritime traffic to and from Israel.

"That means it is in the navy's interest to sail these routes and that implies that naval battles may develop in the Aegean," he said.

The EILAT, one of three US-built Saar-5 the navy received in 1993 and 1994, is a state-of-the art missile corvette.

"The Saar-5 is the only platform of its kind in the navy's arsenal," said Ayalon, who is to leave his post soon. "Its range also provides us with a capability we lacked in the past."

In the past, Ayalon was an ardent opponent of the Saar-5 concept, arguing it was too big and signaled a departure in the navy's concept of deploying a rapid, flexible, and agile force.

Ayalon said the three Dolphin class submarines now being built in Kiel, Germany, would be delivered to Israel by late 1997 and enter service in early 1998.

"These submarines constitute a decisive element in the navy's development," he said.

Air Force Employs Night-Vision System on Border

TA2510090395 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 25 Oct 95 p 2

[Report by Alon Pinhas]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The air force has recently deployed a new night-vision observation system on the Lebanese border that detects from a distance both air and ground infiltration attempts.

AIR FORCE MAGAZINE reports in its new edition that the Balut (Hebrew for acorn), a night-vision detection and observation system which detects infra-red rays emitted by heat, is being used on the border.

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Al-Kabariti: U.S. Bill Does Not Serve Peace

JN2610162895 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has said that His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Saudi second deputy prime minister and minister of defense, stressed in their meeting in New York the need for joint action and a unified the Arab position. He said that contacts and consultations between His Majesty King Husayn and King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, will continue in order to foster the distinguished relations and serve the joint interests of the two countries and the Arab nation.

Al-Kabariti was answering reporters' questions following a UN General Assembly session held to commemorate the UN 50th anniversary. He welcomed the recent statements by His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, noting that his highness was always among those who called for clearing the Arab atmosphere and restoring Arab solidarity. He added: We welcome his highness' initiative, which expresses utmost Arab sincerity and genuineness. He said: We hope that the Arab brothers will take the initiative to consult among each other to achieve Arab reconciliation, which constitutes a joint Arab interest.

Al-Kabariti said that Jordan's position on the U.S. Congress bill — passed on 24 October — on the status of Jerusalem and transferring the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to it is a steady one. He explained that this position is one of reservation vis-a-vis any decision that affects the status of Jerusalem and prejudges the final solution of the city's status, which should be based on Resolution 242, UN resolutions on Jerusalem, and the results of final-status talks on the holy city. Al-Kabariti added that the U.S. Congress position does not serve the peace process, which we hope will be provided with the suitable climate to continue its progress toward the desired comprehensive and just solution. Al- Kabariti added: We expect the U.S. Administration, in its capacity as a cosponsor of the peace process and proceeding from its principled position, not to make prejudgments or take measures that would affect the final status of the holy city. He said: We believe that the White House press spokesman's statement confirms that the U.S. Administration is aware of the dangers of this decision and is serious in its effort to avoid its negative consequences.

Paper Assails U.S. Congress Decision on Embassy

JN2710082295 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 26-27 Oct 95 p 17

[Editorial: "The Categorical Jordanian Rejection of the Unfair Congress Decision"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. legislative branch defied all norms, laws, and even U.S. commitments themselves, by passing a bill on transferring the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This unethical and biased defiance represents the utmost injustice whereby one who does not own Jerusalem grants it to one who does not deserve it.

Jerusalem is a holy city cherished by the followers of the three religions. It is especially dear to those who were entrusted with defending it and who were stationed on its boundaries throughout the past centuries and decades.

Yesterday, the Jordanian House of Representatives issued a crystal-clear statement stressing that Jordan and the Arab and Islamic nation adhere to our legitimate historic right to Jerusalem and its holy places. Through this statement, the House of Representatives expressed the feelings of each Jordanian, Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and human being who believes in justice and coexistence among peoples on the basis of peace, security, and stability which will safeguard the rights of all parties in accordance with international law and legitimacy. This will also safeguard human rights which the U.S. Congress itself has long boasted about.

Given the seriousness of what the U.S. congressmen have committed in terms of disturbing the peace atmosphere and crudely forestalling the final outcome of the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli negotiations under U.S. sponsorship, the U.S. Administration's rejection of the Congress' decision and its plan to use its legal powers to obstruct and nullify it are part of the sound reading of the requirements of security and stability in the Middle East. The Jerusalem issue is a basic pillar of Middle East security and stability because Jerusalem was throughout history the key to war and peace in this important region of the world.

The statement the Jordanian legislative authority issued regarding the U.S. legislative branch's encroachments upon our sacred rights to holy Jerusalem derives additional strength from the fact that we are the most prominent advocates for peace and the leaders of those working for its achievement and of those committed to the letter and spirit of the peace treaty.

This is a clear and firm statement calling for adherence to peace, which is a current necessity and represents the future of the region's peoples and generations. The

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positive impact this national, pan-Arab, Islamic, and humanitarian position is expected to have on those who can convince the U.S. Congress to cancel this decision so that the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations can be completed, is a test as to how serious they and all those concerned are with creating the appropriate atmosphere for restructuring relations in this region on new bases of cooperation, mutual recognition of rights, and joint work for development. The fruit of this will be reaped by the peoples in an atmosphere of security and stability which will be enjoyed by all parties without exception.

First Direct Amman-Tel Aviv Flight Set for Mid-Nov

JN2210142395 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 22 Oct 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—The first direct flight between Queen Alia International Airport in Amman and Ben-Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv will take place in mid-November.

An Arab Wings private plane will run five regular flights each week. This plane has a capacity of 50 passengers. Planes from the Israeli El Al company will run five similar flights.

It is expected that these flights will expand in the future to include al-'Aqabah, Haifa, and other Israeli cities. Aviation officials from both countries have held intensive talks on these flights in implementation of a bilateral transportation agreement. This agreement is expected to be signed as soon as possible.

EU To Help Finance Water, Education Projects

JN2610212495 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Announcer-read report over video from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The European Union will provide Jordan a grant of 20 million European Currency Units [ECU's] to help the kingdom implement its economic reform program. The amount will be used to finance projects in the fields of health, education, social development, and water.

Planning Minister Rima Khalaf and EU representative in Jordan signed the agreement.

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Reaction to U.S. Embassy Move to Jerusalem

Buwayz: Step Destroys U.S. Role

NC2710080595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Oct 95

[Statement by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] First, obviously the U.S. Senate's step will destroy the role of the United States as sponsor and fair broker in the peace process. This step shows the magnitude of the Israeli influence, which takes away from the United States its stance as a superpower that seeks fair decisionmaking.

Second, there is no doubt that this decision will complicate the peace process and cast negative shadows on it. We expect the U.S. Administration, represented by President Clinton, to veto, freeze, and reject this decision.

Defense Minister Denounces Move

NC2710104495 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic GMT 0630 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has stated that the U.S. decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem will have a negative impact. In an exclusive statement to our radio, he pointed out that this decision confirms the United State's bias toward the Zionist enemy. He said the decision also shows that the Untied States is not a neutral or honest broker between the Arabs and the Zionist enemy. He further said that the U.S. decision will further complicate the stalled peace talks, because it proves that the United States is first and foremost interested in the Zionist enemy, who persists in its intransigence and aggressiveness. He said that by making this decision, the U.S. Administration is seeking with all its might to serve the U.S. election campaign and its allies in the Israeli election campaign.

Hizballah Issues Statement

NC2610121595 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement released yesterday, Hizballah said that the U.S. Congress' vote to move the U.S. Embassy in occupied Palestine to Jerusalem is an insolent example that expresses the magnitude of the historical, geographical, political, and legal forgery practiced by successive U.S. administrations on all aspects of conflict in our region. The conflict has arisen as a result of implanting the usurping and alien entity into our region. The United States seeks to distort the nature, background, and dimensions of this conflict so that the Israeli plan to Judaize and settle the land of Palestine will be tailored in line with the distorted U.S. criteria. It also works to turn the plan, which is based on usurpation, aggression, and occupation, into one giving the Jews the total right to Palestine according to false historical, geographical, political, and religious claims that the United States wants to impose on world opinion as the criteria and norm for causing the international situation regarding the conflict between our Arab and Islamic nations and the Zionist entity.

The statement said that the U.S. Administration's persistence in disavowing human norms and values has reached the point of inverting realities. The U.S. Administration, given its domination of the international situation and the UN organizations, is striving to achieve this goal. The statement said that both the Republicans and Democrats are vying to win the favor of the Zionist entity and of the American Jews under the cover of election rivalry. Both parties agree on the legality of the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and its being the unified capital of Israel, disregarding the impact of this hostile position on the feelings of Muslims in all parts of the world.

The statement said that the U.S. decision shows the magnitude of the U.S. support and endorsement of the Zionist entity as a model of peace and that the United States is seeking, through its negotiations, to entrench the complete U.S.-Israeli domination of our region. The statement condemns this flagrant measure and holds the capitulationist Arab rulers fully responsible for the situation in the Arab region. The Arab leaders agreed to relinquish our rights and holy sanctions in response to the U.S. and Israeli conditions through the humiliating negotiations.

Concluding, the statement urges all honest and sincere people throughout the Arab and Islamic world not to keep silent about this new crime and to rise up and meet the challenge so that Jerusalem and Palestine may not be lost and the region may not fall under the yoke of joint U.S.-Israeli domination.

Fadlallah 'Not Surprised' by Decision

NC2610130495 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a television interview, Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah says he wonders how the United States can be an honest broker in the negotiations between Syria and Lebanon on the one hand and Israel on the other as long as it clings totally to Israel's position on political and security levels. His Eminence pointed out that the problem of this U.S. Administration is that it is an Israeli one, even though it carries a U.S. name. Therefore, he said, we were not

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surprised by the U.S. Congress' decision to move the Israeli embassy to Jerusalem. He said that this decision emphasizes that Jerusalem is part of Israel and not a disputed area between the Palestinians and Israelis nor is it an occupied territory.

Amal Movement: Decision 'Hostile' Act

NC2610210495 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Amal Movement said that the U.S. Congress decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy in the Zionist state from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem is yet another hostile U.S. act against the Arab world and the Palestinian people's rights.

Islamic Jihad: Bill 'Declaration of War'

NC2710110695 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic GMT 0630 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Jihad Movement has said that the decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is tantamount to a declaration of war on the Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic nation. The decision, it said, embodies the famous saying that the have-nots are granting something to those who do not deserve it. 'Isam Ahmad, official in charge of foreign relations in the Islamic Jihad Movement, has said that this decision, which provokes the emotions of all Muslims and Christians, and is intended to give a complete Jewish character to Jerusalem, runs counter to all human values and norms worldwide. He called on all Islamic and international forces, establishments, and personalities to reject this conspiracy and confront this serious decision.

Bishop's Opposition to U.S. Decision Reported

NC2710075595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] After meeting with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Bishop Philippus Saliba, bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church of New York and North America, stressed that as long as the south is occupied, the whole of Lebanon is occupied. He called for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425. He stated that Lebanon and Jerusalem are twins: The first is a homeland of peace and a unique formula of coexistence, and Jerusalem is a city for all religions.

Bishop Saliba reminded Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin that Jerusalem existed before David and Solomon and that it will survive Israel as it survived the Crusaders invasion.

Saliba noted that the U.S. decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem is unfair for Jerusalem and the Arabs, adding it is regrettable that it has been some time since a U.S. President with ethics has assumed power.

Hizballah Rejects Israeli Withdrawal Proposal

NC2610120395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on a proposal put forward by Ehuda Baraq, the Israeli interior minister and former chief of staff, a responsible source in Hizballah stated the following:

Once again a Zionist official has put forward conditions for withdrawal from the occupied areas in south Lebanon. We realize that these proposals put the ball in the Lebanese court, portray the Zionist party as ready for withdrawal, and embarrass the Lebanese party by making it seem responsible for the continuing volatile situation in the south. Thus, we would like to emphasize the following constants and principles:

1. The Zionist enemy, especially considering the harsh blows it has been suffering at the hands of the Islamic Resistance heroes, is not in any position to dictate conditions. Consequently, it has only two options: Either withdraw unconditionally from our land or suffer further painful blows.

2. The Zionist proposal is not new. It was previously rejected by the Lebanese at all official and mass levels, as well as by the resistance. It has been emphasized that the resistance will continue as long as one Zionist soldier remains on our land.

3. The Zionist proposal is part of an attempt to portray the confusion in the Zionist society and the ongoing argument among the Zionist military and political leaders as a result of the situation in Lebanon. The enemy leaders ignore the fact that Lebanon can no longer tolerate hostile attempts to undermine or fragment it or to foment divisions, particularly now that positive steps have been taken supporting the resistance plan and the resistance has proven that it is a strong arm defending all Lebanese in their efforts to liberate their land and ensure their independence.

4. The enemy is aware that their maneuvers and smoke screens cannot cover up the real problem—the continuing occupation. We believe that everyone realizes the need to confront this problem with unified ranks by supporting the resistance and through understanding, cooperation, and integration with the brothers in Damascus. This is necessary to prevent the enemy from gaining political victories even though it has failed to undermine us with its military and security forces.

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Israeli Sources Deny Proposal

NC2610121895 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Regarding the situation in the border area, in response to reports published in the newspapers AL-LIWA' and NIDA' AL-WATAN about an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon, and in response to a question by our political correspondent about these reports on Israel setting conditions for a withdrawal from south Lebanon, reliable Israeli sources have confirmed to our correspondent that the reports in these papers are not worth commenting on. The reports are a psychological warfare tactic and a blatant attempt to sow doubt in the minds of the inhabitants of the border strip regarding the Israeli presence there. The sources said that the Israeli prime minister and Uri Lubrani, coordinator of Lebanese affairs in the Israeli Government, have repeatedly confirmed beyond any doubt that Israel is not considering any change in its current presence in the security zone. Israel is now considering how to deal with Hizballah and the rest of the terrorist organizations.

These sources said that there are currently no Israeli proposals for activating the peace process in Lebanon and that Israel is not concerned about this, because for purely selfish considerations Syria is not interested in promoting the Lebanese track and does not allow Lebanon to do so.

These sources also told our correspondent that Damascus will not give up its traditional policy of backing terrorist acts in the south at the expense of the southerners and all Lebanese people, and against Lebanon's national interests.

EU Delegation Arrives, Discusses Conference

Support of Resolution 425 Urged

BR2610160595 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1240 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Unattributed report: "EU Delegation in Beirut Discusses Mediterranean Peace and Cooperation"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Beirut, 26 Oct (EFE) — An EU delegation, led by Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana, arrived in Lebanon today to analyze with Lebanese leaders, among other things, the preparations for the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November.

During the delegation's stay in Beirut, where it plans to analyze the Middle East peace process, it will meet with Lebanese President Ilyas el-Hirawi, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz. [passage omitted]

Spanish diplomatic sources in Lebanon told EFE that the talks between the EU and Lebanon "are part of the Community's framework to bolster the European presence in the area, and aim to analyze the peace process, the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Barcelona, as well as bilateral relations."

Lebanese sources said that Buwayz will express to his Spanish counterpart his country's wish that the EU play a more effective role in the Middle Eastern peace process and that it increases its aid for the reconstruction of Lebanon.

According to sources close to Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, "Lebanon attaches great importance to this visit, because it relies on the EU's continuing support of the Lebanese stance with regard to the need to apply Resolution 425 of the UN Security Council, as well as our country's stance at the Barcelona Conference."

Resolution 425 requires the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the nearly 1,000 square km which they have occupied in the South of Lebanon since 1982.

The arrival of the delegation in Beirut coincides with increased tensions in the southern part of Lebanon where Israeli aircraft today increased the number of low-level flights and simulated raids.

Buwayz Meets Delegation, Comments

NC2610205595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The European troika delegation met with Lebanese officials today and discussed the preparations for the Barcelona conference on European-Mediterranean issues. The conference is scheduled for the end of November. The conference's objective is to establish economic cooperation between the European Union [EU] and the Mediterranean countries. The talks also centered on the draft partnership agreement between Lebanon and the EU. Negotiations on this agreement will begin on 9 November. The talks also dealt with the peace process and the Israeli threats to Lebanon. The European troika left Beirut a few minutes ago.

The delegation led by Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana arrived at Beirut Airport from Cairo at 1330 today. [passage omitted]

The delegation spoke first to the foreign minister. Following the talks, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said:

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[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Minister Buwayz, do you have any comments on the European troika's visit to Lebanon today?

[Buwayz] [passage omitted] The visit is in preparation for the Barcelona conference to be held at the end of November. It is also a continuation of our talks in Brussels, which formed the basis of the Lebanese-European meetings. We reviewed the major political and economic issues to be discussed at the Barcelona conference. There are, of course, Lebanese proposals to be presented to the delegation's head and to this conference. These proposals concern the Middle East crisis and several rights to which Lebanon is committed. [end recording] [passage omitted]

The troika delegation then went to B'abda Palace where it was received by President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Minister Buwayz. The delegation then visited Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri before departing Beirut.

Minister Hails 'Superb' Attacks on Israelis

NC2610195295 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 17 Oct 95 p 6

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Minister of National Defense Muhsin Dallul hailed the recent heroic operations by the Islamic Resistance. He regarded them as "superb because they targeted an occupier of our land." He added that "regardless of our position, we must positively and highly evaluate these operations. The heroes who carried out these operations represent our national strength. It is our right to carry out these operations as long as the enemy occupies our land."

Dallul was speaking yesterday afternoon during his visit with Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah. He was accompanied by his office director Wasif Shararah and media adviser 'Ali al-Musawi.

The conferees discussed the latest local developments and the recent Zionist escalation in southern Lebanon. [passage omitted]

Egypt's Musa Comments on 'Resistance' in South

NC2610154895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said Egypt believes that the resistance in the south is not a terrorist act nor do any terrorists exist in this area. He added, what exists there is a Lebanese resistance originally established to resist occupation and this is a legitimate right for the people of the south who are suffering from violent acts.

Musa urged the world to distinguish between the principle of resistance and terrorism. He noted that someone who defends his right to live peacefully in his country is completely different from someone who seeks hidden political goals with his acts.

Syrian Link to Presidential Term Extension Viewed

NC2710091295 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 20 Oct 95 p 1

[Article by Charle Ayyub: "An Opportunity for Reform"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Somewhere between slave-like loyalty and an opposition that calls for strikes and demonstrations, a responsible, constitutional, legal, and serious opposition is needed that will not sell its credibility every hour or whenever a national deadline comes up.

The 11 deputies who opposed the extension of the president's term yesterday showed that democracy can survive in Lebanon. They proved that the herd-mentality policy does not apply to everyone.

Alliance with Damascus should not mean that the Lebanese are not free to make their own decisions. On the contrary, it means that patriots who are allied with Damascus are able to act on their own convictions; President al-Asad's wisdom and Syria's profound sense of pan-Arabism has room enough for all patriotic stands as long as they are based on nationalist principles.

In this context it is important to express appreciation for the position of Deputy Mikha'il Dahir, Deputy Zahir al-Khatib, and the deputies who did not attend the extension session. By not attending, they proved their credibility and the credibility of every patriot's alliance with Damascus.

We are allied with Damascus on the basis of the struggle against Israel. We stand in the same trench in this struggle. We are allied with Damascus on the basis of the special Lebanese-Syrian relationship and because linking the Lebanese and Syrian negotiating tracks strengthens the position. We are allied on the basis of Lebanese national unity and the need to liberate the south and western al-Biqa'.

These are the foundations on which we allied ourselves with Damascus. As to domestic Lebanese issues, however, they should be subject to the wishes of the Lebanese people. Their representatives should ask the people what they want and then should relay the real picture of public sentiment to those who have influence on Lebanese events.

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We allied ourselves with Damascus on the above foundations, not on the basis of whether a citizen is for or against President al-Hirawi, Speaker Birri, former Speaker al-Husayni, Prime Minister al- Hariri, and so on with regard to former Prime Minister al-Huss, Junblatt, Arsalan, etc.

If the local media reports about interventions that made the deputies vote for extending the president's term are true, then this will damage the relationship between Beirut and Damascus and the extension, as it occurred, will be a constitutional farce.

Setting aside all that has been written and noting that al-Hirawi will be president until 1998, the logic of legality makes it necessary for all of us to rectify the error. This is President al-Hirawi's primary duty. He should be the first person to show the Lebanese that they can make their own decisions about their internal affairs and that the alliance with Damascus is a strategic alliance, not an alliance that permits each Lebanese party to draw Damascus into its own narrow conflicts.

President al-Hirawi is also required to rebuild the country's institutions. Although he has made some courageous decisions during his term, the feeling that the country continues to be administered as a ranch has persisted because of the government's wrong policies.

He must also work to abolish the spirit of sectarianism that resurfaced near the end of his term; it was almost extinct, but then government posts were distributed on a sectarian basis.

President al-Hirawi can boast that he obtained an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies. He cannot, however, boast of real popular support. We hope that he will now seize an important opportunity in Lebanon's history that has not been offered to anyone else before him. If he wants a modern, developed, sovereign country free of sectarianism, the opportunity is his to seize today. If he wants the country to continue being managed as a ranch, history will record that 110 deputies voted to extend his term but that he obtained no real popular support.

Staying on in the palace, hearing bullets fire in an artificial show of joy, and seeing decorations that had been pre-prepared should not blind the ruler to the real wishes of the Lebanese public. The truth is that the Lebanese people did not want an extension of the presidential term. The people's deputies voted for the extension in response to a strategic Syrian decision. If President al-Hirawi wants to win public sentiment over to his side, he must build a modern state of institutions and build a strategic alliance relationship with Damascus, not an executive relationship. The Lebanese citizen must feel that he has self-respect and that his country has self-respect. Consequently, he will feel that Lebanon and Syria draw strength from each other and that they have a similar destiny; this, however, must rest on a foundation of existence not abolition.

Hizballah's Shaykh Qasim on 'Resistance'

NC2610114695 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Oct 95 p 9

[Interview with Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim by correspondents Talal Khalidi and Khalil Iskandarani in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [AL-'ARABI] What are the indications of the two recent operations against the enemy and what messages does the Resistance want to send?

[Qasim] The Islamic Resistance has chosen a clear course to liberate the land through direct military confrontation with the occupation forces. Any political move will be useless and will only give the enemy additional potential and capability. In view of this, the only way to oppose the enemy is through a direct military resistance that can cause pain and expel the occupiers. [passage omitted]

[AL-'ARABI] Some link the escalation of your operations to the stalemate on the Syrian track and your recent meeting with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and the Syrian president's son. Is this true?

[Qasim] We have reiterated for the thousandth time and in statements on the highest levels that our military resistance is connected to the situation on the ground—strong or weak—not with the political situation, regardless of whether or not there is progress in the negotiations. We did not approve of the negotiations in the first place. Because we are classified as absolute rejectors of the negotiations, it is natural that our alternative is continuous resistance. If we believe in negotiations, it would be possible to say that we exploit the negotiations to achieve a gain and that we reduce [our operations] when there is progress. But when we do not believe in negotiations, it is natural that our logic and work be the logic of continuous resistance. [passage omitted]

The our recent visit to the Syrian leadership, particularly to President al-Asad's son, Dr. Bashshar al-Asad, and the consultations that we held are part of our presence and participation with all those concerned with our work in the region. We deliberated on various issues and reached understanding on common points. This is an indivisible part of our battle against the Israeli enemy; it does not mean that there are instructions to escalate or reduce [our operations]. No official inside or outside

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of Lebanon has asked us to stop, reduce, or increase our operations. The initiative is in the hands of the Resistance fighters and depends on the situation on the ground.

[AL-'ARABI] Was the strongly worded U.S. warning to Hizballah and the insinuation of a Syrian-Iranian role meant to cover up an extensive Israeli aggression or to cushion the effect of the recent operation so that a large-scale Israel attack will not abort the Amman economic summit?

[Qasim] The recent U.S. statement is a big boon for us. We always need a yardstick to measure the effect of Resistance operations against the Israeli enemy. Observers have noticed a clear and gradual escalation of the U.S. stance over the past few years. This escalation permeates bitterness, pain, and failure. In the beginning the United States called for halting Hizballah operations. Then it called for disarming Hizballah and curbing its actions. But the United States soon discovered that all Lebanese people—Christians and Muslims—have gotten closer to Hizballah and have strongly rallied around it. Hizballah has strongly and firmly become a part of the internal Lebanese political fabric. This has not adversely affected Hizballah's resistance but, on the contrary, Resistance activity has increased. Hizballah has become better at inflicting pain on the enemy. The United States feels its road in Lebanon is closed. Instead of being besieged, expelled, or harassed, Hizballah has become acceptable and a good and dear example for the Lebanese people and a source of pride for the Lebanese state.

Resistance fighters are now fortified by popular and official support in a way that prevents the Israeli enemy from penetrating, influencing, or striking. The United States does not like this. If we add to this the Syrian support for the Lebanese people's right to resist and the links between the Lebanese and Syrian tracks so that one will strengthen the other against the enemy's diktats and conditions, we can see that the United States is in a predicament. How can it face this predicament?

Praise be to God, when the U.S. official spokesman accused the Lebanese people of being responsible for the Resistance, this indicated the depth of the Israeli and U.S. predicaments. The spokesman can convince a few people that there is a group [Hizballah] that has strayed from the general course, but he cannot convince anyone that a whole people, who agree on the same viewpoint, are wrong. This is an indication that they want to coerce this people into giving up their rights, but they refuse to do so. Therefore, we see the recent U.S. statements as a big blunder for the declared U.S. policy and an indication that the Resistance's stance is sound.

We are not afraid of the escalations of U.S. aggression against our people and nation. We view the U.S. statements as an attempt to cover up any possible Israeli aggression. However, objectives and conditions make any Israeli initiative for extensive aggression detrimental to Israel's interest. Israel knows that the response will not be simple and that it cannot bear its results.

Charge Explodes Under Car of UN Employee

NC2710094895 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An explosive charge placed under the car of Shamma Barakat Tamim went off on the eastern highway of Sidon at dawn today. Tamim is a Palestinian female employee of the 'Ayn-al-Hulwah office of UNRWA [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East]. According to security sources, there was only material damage and the implications of the incident are not yet known.

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Reaction to U.S. Embassy Decision Continues

'Greater Firmness' Urged

JN2610170795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab and world public opinion has received with extreme displeasure the U.S. Congress' bill approving the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to occupied Arab Jerusalem. This bill might have been understood, albeit not accepted, had it been passed by an unofficial or nongovernmental U.S. organization, or even by a U.S. political party. But it is unreasonable, incomprehensible, and unacceptable for this bill to be passed by the American people's legislative institution, which is supposed to enact and supervise laws, seek justice, and respect the law in all its measures. This should include U.S. and international law, and, consequently, the UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. One's displeasure and disapproval are heightened if one remembers that U.S. Congress issued this bill for electoral, selfish, not to say opportunistic purposes Besides, the U.S. Congress' bill violates UN Security Council Resolution 252 demanding that the Israeli Knesset's decision to annex occupied Jerusalem to Israel be abolished. Moreover, the U.S. Congress' bill on the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem violates the preamble of the U.S. Constitution itself.

While this bill by U.S. Congress is a shock, its timing is another shock. It was announced at the peak of the world celebrations on the United Nations' 50th anniversary. This anniversary has revived the world peoples' hopes for the prevalence of international legitimacy, which had almost vanished because of the exercise of double standards and disturbance of the standards of justice. This is as if the U.S. Congress' bill wants to tell all peoples: Have no good thoughts about the future of the world. The disappointment, or rather the shock caused by the Congress' bill to the world conscience, calls for a review of the past 50 years. This will help peoples of the world know why Israel has defied and continues to defy the resolutions of the international legitimacy. It is a known fact that Israel is the only state that has emerged from under the cloak of the United Nations. In other words, Israel appeared in accordance with the resolution on the partition of Palestine issued by the United Nations in 1947. However, Israel is the only side defying the UN resolutions and has been refusing to implement them for 47 years.

It is also a known fact that the United Nations made it a condition for Israel to be accepted as a member to implement the UN resolution on the safe repatriation of Palestinian refugees to their homeland. Israel pledged to do so. But when it obtained the UN membership, it refused to implement that resolution. It also refused and continues to refuse to implement dozens of other UN resolutions preserving the rights of the Arab nation, especially the rights of the Palestinian Arab people. This means that there are powers protecting Israel's defiance of the UN Security Council resolutions, as proved again on 24 October by the U.S. Congress bill, which puts the illegitimate ambitions of a foreign state above U.S. interests. This seriously harms the peace process and the U.S. role in this process, something which has prompted the Clinton administration to express dissatisfaction with this bill. It is in interest of regional and world peace to develop the U.S. Administration's dissatisfaction with this bill into greater firmness with the party that has not decided to make the peace that is based on the resolutions of the international legitimacy its strategic option. Unquestionably, this party is Israel.

Decision Declares 'War' on Arabs

JN2710082395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 27 Oct 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-BA'TH today comments on the U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem. The decision comes at a time when the peace process is suffering from a stalemate because of the intransigent Israeli position. The paper asks: Is this decision in the interest of the peace process or against it? It is certainly against the peace process. All reactions are unanimous that this decision will not serve the peace process because it will prompt Israel to show further disregard toward international legitimacy and its resolutions instead of responding to this legitimacy and its resolutions.

AL-BA'TH adds: The world was waiting for a decision by the U.S. Congress to force Israel to comply with the resolutions of international legitimacy to establish a real peace in the region. What happened, however, is that the U.S. Congress decided to declare war on the Arabs, instead of Israel.

The paper points out that this unjust decision was made after a series of talks were held with Yitzhaq Rabin in Washington, through which Rabin received more military and financial support.

AL-BA'TH concludes: There is a consensus that the U.S. Congress decision will encourage Israel to destroy the peace process. Thus, this decision should be faced with an Arab position that asserts that this nation still exists. This position should be a warning to those who

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made this decision. The substance of this message is that this decision of yours cannot cancel history and the Arabs' eternal right to their Jerusalem. This message should also stress that this decision is a challenge to international legitimacy, which uses double standards when dealing with different nations.

AL-THAWRAH comments on the same issue. In one of its commentaries, the paper says: The UN 50th anniversary celebrations were drawing to a close amid an outpour of feelings expressed through the speeches of the heads of delegations. Before that, the nonaligned summit in Colombia reflected a general state of concern over developments in the post-Cold War era and a global consensus on the need to reform the international organization and improve its performance to make it more efficient in dealing with current and future challenges. Amid all these developments, the U.S. Congress passed a bill to move the U.S. Embassy to occupied Jerusalem and in less than a few hours allocated $3 billion to Israel as a generous reward to the Rabin government.

AL-THAWRAH says the Congress decision is a serious precedent in international relations and in the U.S. attitude toward other peoples and their legitimate rights. These rights are guaranteed by international laws and Security Council resolutions.

The paper adds: This decision is a treacherous stab to the peace process and a strong stab to the U.S. role and its credibility in peace efforts in the region and the world. This happened at a time when the world was waiting for Washington to seize the opportunity and use its influence, prestige, and power to achieve a breakthrough in the faltering peace process and to make progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks to enable the region to achieve a just and comprehensive peace.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says the U.S. Congress decision is a wrong step in the wrong direction. This decision will no doubt have negative effects on peace and U.S. credibility. This step is a departure from Security Council resolutions, which deem Jerusalem occupied territory. This step also means U.S. endorsement of the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. This contradicts international charters and the U.S. peace initiative and conflicts with the role of the U.S. sponsor.

The paper adds: This step is a serious U.S. shift that is in the interest of obstructing peace. It is also a contribution by Congress to the exposed game played by Israel every time it is besieged by the obligations of peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds that this step supports Israel's bid to entrench its occupation of Jerusalem. It is also meant to highlight this new event and dim the peace process, which is threatened with collapse. The credibility of the U.S. Administration regarding peace is once again put to the test. Optimism about the peace process is also likely to evaporate if the peace process remains at a standstill as a result of Israeli rejection.

The paper demands that the U.S. Administration live up to its pledges and work to achieve peace on the Madrid foundations in line with its role as an honest sponsor and partner in the talks. By doing so, the United States will champion UN principles and the U.S. land-for-peace formula.

U.S. Decision To Freeze Peace Efforts Reported

JN2610181295 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Report by Huda al-Husayni in London]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to Radio Monte Carlo, a senior U.S. official has said that work on the Syrian-Israeli track has stopped. The U.S. official added: The U.S. Administration will not make any effort to invigorate this track. He said: This issue has disappeared from the screen of U.S. concerns.

The U.S. official said that U.S. officials will continue to call on the Syrian and Israeli sides to move, adding that the objective of this new position is to put pressure on Syria. He noted that the United States will not embark on any initiative because it has already made attempts in this regard. Now, he said, the Syrian side must come up with something.

The U.S. official added: The Palestinian-Israel track has been launched and will not stop. Jordan, also, is not worried about the Syrian reactions, particularly since Israel, supported by America, provides it with protection. The official said that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad fears that Israel will strike a deal with Iraq. Thus, the Syrians threaten to achieve a Syrian-Iraqi-Iranian alliance. The U.S. official said: These methods do not arouse any American fears any more, because they will not succeed for many reasons. The Syrian officials believe that the situation in Iraq, where the Iraqi regime is now isolated and rejected, serves their objectives because that regime does not threaten them, and in addition to this, the Gulf officials will continue to come to Damascus. Concluding his statement, the U.S. official said: Thus, Syria is not ready to undermine its relations with the Gulf states.

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Government Not Informed of Decision

JN2610212095 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Report by Hisham Milhim in Washington, from the "Panorama" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al- Mu'allim has said the recent contacts the U.S. officials held with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on the one hand and with the Israeli officials on the other have not ended the current stalemate on the Syrian-Israeli track, because Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is seeking to obstruct the U.S. peace initiative and to prevent achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Regarding what has been reported that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has decided to freeze his efforts on the Syrian track, Ambassador al-Mu'allim said: We have not been informed that the U.S. side has frozen its activities on the Syrian track. If it has made such a decision, it must at least inform us of it first and then announce it.

Ambassador al-Mu'allim's remarks are identical to what was announced by U.S. sources that President Bill Clinton promised to raise the situation of the Syrian track during his meeting with Yitzhaq Rabin on Wednesday. Nothing much has so far been divulged about that meeting.

In his statement to Radio Monte Carlo, the Syrian ambassador said: The Americans promised to inform us of the result of this meeting, particularly since we concluded from what Secretary Christopher conveyed to Minister al-Shar', following his meeting with Rabin, that Rabin is trying to obstruct the U.S. initiative by placing more obstacles which will not help achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Although Ambassador al-Mu'allim said that the U.S. sponsor promised to continue contacts and peace efforts with both parties, he however said: Stalemate still prevails on the Syrian-Israeli track.

Asked if Israel's continued insistence on ground early warning stations was one of the reasons for the stalemate, al-Mu'allim said: In fact, the essence of security arrangements was not discussed during the meeting between al-Shar' and Christopher. The talks, he added, focused on measures to end the stalemate on the track. The Syrian ambassador added: However, what we heard from Christopher, who was citing Rabin, did not call for optimism at all.

Christopher's Upcoming Visit Announced

JN2710065895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington — Nicholas Burns, U.S. State Department spokesman, said U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will pay a short visit to Damascus on 30 October for talks on the peace process on the Syrian track.

REUTER cited Burns last night as saying Christopher will take the opportunity of his presence in the region to visit Damascus.

Vice President, BBC Chief Review Peace Process

JN2610213495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1200 today BBC President Marmaduke Hussey and Sam Younger, director of the BBC international programs.

The meeting was attended by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs. Discussions dealt with the situation in the region. The vice president reviewed Syria's stand on the peace issue and the obstacles placed by Israel to block the peace process which is based on Resolutions 242 and 338. The vice president also reviewed the negative effects of the U.S. Congress' decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem.

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Afghanistan

Taleban: Government Positions in Bini Hissar Captured

BK2610114295 Hong Kong AFP in English 1127 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, Oct 26 (AFP) — Afghan government forces on Thursday [26 October] fought off a Taleban air attack on a military base west of Kabul and repelled two major ground assaults by the Islamic militia in the capital's suburbs, the defence ministry said.

A Taleban jet dropped two bombs on the Kargah hills overlooking a military base of President Borhanoddin Rabbani's forces, defence ministry spokesman Abdullah said. The jet was chased away by heavy anti-aircraft fire from pro-Rabbani gunners but there were no casualties, he added.

Anti-aircraft fire continued even after two government planes came to intercept the Taleban jet, but they were not hit, the spokesman said.

The key garrison of Kargah, is 20 kilometers (12 miles) west of Kabul. On Wednesday night, the Taleban launched offensives in the southeastern and western suburbs. But the government said both attacks were repulsed.

The first assault started at Sangi Nawishta, near the besieged city's southeastern suburb of Sia Bini. Fighting raged all night, the spokesman said.

The Taleban also mounted a 90-minute heavy artillery and missile attack in a bid to advance towards Kabul from the western district of Maidan Shahar.

Mulla Malang, a Taleban spokesman said fighting continued Thursday in the southern, eastern and western fringes of Kabul, resulting in the capture of government positions in the southeastern outskirt of Bini Hissar and advances in western Paghman province.

No independent confirmation was immediately available.

The defence ministry spokesman said government jets from the Bagaram airbase, also participated in the overnight fighting, pounding Taleban positions in the area.

The attacks destroyed six Taleban tanks, four armoured personnel carriers and killed many fighters, he said. Again no independent confirmation was available.

Kabul residents said three rockets landed in the city on Thursday, but there were immediate reports of casualties.

The Taleban movement which started in the Koranic colleges of southern Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan, mostly comprise members of the country's ethnic Pashtun community.

The Islamic warriors have vowed to topple the three-year old government of President Rabbani and establish Islamic law throughout the country.

A previous attempt by the Taleban "Students of Religion" to capture this city of nearly one million people was repulsed in March.

The Rabbani government alleges that the Taleban are trained and armed by Pakistan, a charge denied by Islamabad. The Taleban militia launched their latest attempt on October 11 after capturing large swathes of western Afghanistan.

Government Forces Repulse 'Broad Invasion'

LD2610174395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A fierce attack by Benazir Bhutto's Taleban, launched from two directions south and west of Kabul, was defeated last night by the resistance and bravery of the Islamic army.

According to Bakhtar, last night Benazir Bhutto's Taleban embarked on a broad invasion against the positions of the Islamic army from the two directions of Sang-e Naweshta [about 30 km southeast of Kabul city] and Maydan Shar [capital of Vardak Province west of Kabul]. Their attack along the Maydan Shar front was foiled after three hours of fighting. In the fighting along Sang-e Naweshta, which continued for 12 hours, the Taleban was eventually forced to retreat after sustaining heavy loss of life and material.

In a report received the figure of Taleban's losses in last night's attack has been shown at 90 men. A number of dead bodies are still lying along the two sides of the Sang-e Naweshta. Commander Gol Hayder Khan said to the correspondent of the Bakhtar agency that this was the very attack of the Taleban which had been called a decisive attack by Benazir Bhutto. [Words indistinct] With the blessing of God, the Taleban lost the ability to resist after leaving behind six tanks and four motor-vehicles.

Mohammad Zahir, son of Haji Nawroz, inhabitant of Paktia Province, who was captured last night after being injured, said that he had forcibly been sent to the front without having any interest in the fighting.

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Taleban Fires Rockets at Kabul; Family Killed

LD2610181095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night Kabul citizens witnessed a heroic defense of the city's security belts by the forces of the Islamic army which have disappointed the enemy's last hope for capturing Kabul. When the Taleban group was disappointed in making any advance, they began firing rockets at residential areas. As a result of these rockets at least a family of five of Mohammad Yunus, a baker, was jointly martyred in Qalacha area [east of Kabul city].

A bomber aircraft of the Taleban [words indistinct] and dropped bombs on [word indistinct]. No loss of life or material has been reported.

'Fierce Fighting' Continues in Bamian

LD2610233395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports received from Kabul say that fierce fighting is going on between the government and opposition forces in Bamian, west of Parwan in Doab, Shekhali, and Shebar areas.

According to a report from Kabul by the Central News Unit, the Afghan government forces have succeeded in strengthening their positions in Shebar area after their advances in this direction.

In their advances toward the city of Bamian, the forces of Borhanoddin Rabbani intend to open one again the supply road to the north between Parwan and Kabul Provinces.

India

Major Parties Condemn U.S. Decision on Arms Supply

BK2610162695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Major political parties have strongly condemned the U.S. decision to resume arms supply to Pakistan. Expressing concern over the development, the Congress-I says that it will start an arms race in the subcontinent depriving the people of their development needs. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, told newsmen in New Delhi today that the American decision raises doubts whether Washington is serious about fighting terrorism.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has described the U.S. decision as an unfriendly act by the Clinton Administration. The party leader, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said the development is inimical to India's security. According to him, the U.S. decision is a consequence of the government's failure in the field of diplomacy.

The CPI [Communist Party of India] and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] said the supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan will increase tension and provoke an arms race in the region. Both the parties demanded immediate cancellation of the cooperation between India and the United States in the defense sector.

The Samata Party has demanded the immediate recall of the Indian ambassador in Washington. In a statement, the party spokesman, Mr. Harikishore Singh, said he has written to the prime minister to convene an all party meeting to discuss the issue.

The Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the U.S. decision will adversely affect the business relations between the two countries.

Youth Congress-I activists today held a demonstration outside the U.S. embassy in New Delhi to protest against Washington's decision. They gave a memorandum to the embassy official addressed to President Clinton. They were led by the Youth Congress-I chief, Mr. M.S. Bitta.

U.S. Hostage 'Seriously Ill'; Al-Faran Looks for Doctor

BK2610124695 Hong Kong AFP in English 1224 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SRINAGAR, India Oct 26 (AFP) - An American hostage among four westerners seized by Muslim extremists in Kashmir is seriously ill and the captors are looking for a doctor, an official said here.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said "sympathisers" of the kidnappers visited the main hospital in Anantnag town, some 60 kilometres (37 miles) south of here, on Wednesday [25 October] to find a physician for 42-year-old Donald Hutchings.

Sources said they did not find a "specialist" in the hospital.

"The foreigners have received treatment from local medical authorities in different villages but one of them needs a specialist for his ailment," a top police officer said.

"The American is suffering from frostbite leading to infection and needs immediate medical attention as he cannot walk," intelligence sources said.

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The four hostages, now into their fourth month of captivity, are reportedly close to Anantnag town, intelligence sources said.

Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, German Dirk Hasert, 26, and Hutchings were seized by gunmen from the Al-Faran rebel outfit between July 4 and 8 near the Kashmir resort of Pahalgam.

Indian authorities have rejected the demand by the previously-unknown Al-Faran to free 15 jailed militants in exchange for the hostages and has ruled out military operations to rescue them.

The hostages, alongwith their heavily-armed abductors, were seen by local villagers near the village of Ladru, some 30 kilometers (18 miles) south of Anatnag, two weeks ago for the first time after their kidnapping in early July.

A driver of a passenger bus and two guides who had helped the abductors in the second week of October were arrested and released after questioning.

More than 12,000 people have died since the beginning of a Muslim secessionist drive in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, since 1989. The rebels have alsi staged several kidnappings.

Rao Comments on UNSC Membership, Sri Lanka

BK2710095995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has expressed the hope that India will get permanent membership in the expanded United Nations Security Council [UNSC].

Talking to newspersons on board the flight while returning home after his three-nation tour, Mr. Narasimha Rao said India's role in the world body has been vigorous and constructive. Referring to the just-concluded special commemorative meeting of the United Nations, the prime minister said he took the opportunity to reaffirm India's traditional high standing in international affairs. Interested countries, who are attending the session, expressed the desire to cooperate with India in all areas, Mr. Rao added. Both the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] at Cartagena and the UN Golden Jubilee meeting provided useful opportunities of reviewing India's relations with each of the countries.

The foreign secretary, Mr. Salman Haider, said that India has expressed its concern over the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] changing its strategy and striking the soft targets. He said this was discussed during a bilateral meeting between Mr. Narasimha Rao and the Sri Lankan president in New York. According to UNI, the extradition of the LTTE leader, Prabhakaran, was also mentioned during the talks.

As reported, the prime minister returned home last night.

UN Envoy Urges Phased Elimination of Nuclear Arms

BK2710100195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At the United Nations in New York, the Indian representative, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has called upon nuclear weapon states to eliminate their arsenals in a time-bound and phased manner.

Addressing a UN committee, he said since the indefinite extension of NPT [nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty], some nuclear weapon states do not even care to discuss the phased elimination of weapons. He said recent tests carried out by some nuclear weapon states, which are parties to NPT, have further compounded the problem.

Mr. Vajpayee reiterated India's stand that the dispute in the Kashmir was the occupation of a part of the state by Pakistan. He asked Islamabad to sincerely try to resolve bilateral differences. He told the UN committee that India has been calling for bilateral talks with Pakistan for several years, but failed to receive any response.

Iran

West, Israel Criticized on Attack on Diplomat

NC2610172595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] A few days have elapsed since the assassination attempt against the charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Argentina. A Zionist terrorist group has admitted to carrying out the attack but the Tel Aviv regime continues its efforts to conceal its involvement in this terrorist action.

Regardless of the host country's responsibility for the safety of the diplomatic representatives on its soil, the confession by the Zionist group could open the way for many judicial investigations into the attempt on the Iranian charge d'affaires' life.

According to witnesses and evidence, the group that has claimed responsibility for the assassination attempt is an underground Zionist group which acts to ensure and preserve the objectives of Zionism. In any case, the fact that in the recent three-day UN General Assembly

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session, the countries professing to combat terrorism, which complained about terrorist actions and called for international regulations on this, are the ones that have been silent on the assassination attempt against the Iranian charge d'affaires. The Western mass media, in cooperation with them, has relegated it to oblivion between the lines of all the other news.

Of course, in view of the spiteful stances of some governments and the international mass media's affiliation with Zionist circles, overlooking this terrorist action seems natural. Despite this, it was expected that in view of the importance of the recent UN session, the issue would be taken seriously and at least this terrorist action and its agents would be condemned.

Opposition Groups Issue Statement on Protests

NC2710072895 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1500 GMT 26 Oct 95

[Joint statement issued by the Democratic Party of Kordestan of Iran, the Feda'iyan-e Khalq Union Organization-Iran, the Cherikha-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq of Iran-Minority, and the Organization of the Revolutionary Workers of Iran-Rah-e Kargar on 12 October]

[FBIS Translated Text] The demonstrations by Tehran University students is the prologue to a new phase in the student movement. On Wednesday, 11 October, Tehran University was the scene of (?protest) demonstrations. This extensive protest movement came after a raid by Ansar-e Hezbollah forces at a lecture session and rapidly turned into student (?clashes) and direct confrontation with the regime and its repressive organs.

The movement, which started when people gathered for the lecture, took on such vast proportions with the participation of a large number of other students that it forced the attacking ruffians, who were supported by the [Islamic Revolution Guards] Corps and the [Islamic] Committees, to retreat.

The chants of "death to fascism" by the demonstrations, which manifested the demonstrators [words indistinct] toward the rule, toward the stands by the Islamic Republic's [words indistinct], and their brandishing of their claws and teeth showed their increased fear of [word indistinct] movements.

Following these demonstrations, most of the officials and ruling organs demanded harsher policies against the students, and all their official newspapers warned of the consequences of such protests and called for more intervention by the Army and IRGC in such demonstrations.

At its [words indistinct] Sunday session, the regime's Majles (?approved) a bill, which contains seven paragraphs, on dealing with movements threatening security.

These reactions show how shaky the regime's position is and indicate the further weakening of its base and its fear that the protests by the masses will spread. They show that the rulers of the Islamic Republic will not permit the opposition to speak out at all when it adopts a political form and starts to organize gatherings, even if such gatherings are organized by forces closest to the regime and with [words indistinct] of the regime. And its only [word indistinct] is to (?stifle) any type of justice-seeking and freedom-seeking call.

[Dated] 20 Mehr 1374 [12 October]

[Signed] The Democratic Party of Kordestan of Iran, the Feda'iyan-e Khalq Union Organization-Iran, the Cherikha-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq of Iran-Minority, and the Organization of the Revolutionary Workers of Iran-Rah-e Kargar

Commentary Examines Relations With Iraq

NC2510084095 Tehran SALAM in Persian 12 Oct 95 p 8

[Commentary by Naqi Aqalu: "The Camels Must Go!"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal, Iraqi deputy minister of foreign affairs, arrived in Tehran on 19 Shahrivar [10 September] for a seven-day visit. His talks with Foreign Minister Velayati were held behind closed doors, and both sides refused to be interviewed by reporters.

These reporters probably knew from the very start what the objective was behind the Iraqi politician's visit to Iran and what topics his discussions with the head of our country's diplomacy would revolve around. Moreover, because of the significance of the issue and the situation in Iraq, as well as the status of bilateral relations and their impact on the region, they considered silence to be within the framework of our country's national interests and did not insist on satisfying their curiosity.

There is no doubt that the rulers in Iraq—and namely Saddam—who have been ruling in Mesopotamia for almost three decades are bent on expanding their political, economic, and other relations with Iran, which they feel will mitigate the pressures of their political isolation. This isolation stems from both their endless expansionism and the involvement of aggressive powers in the region. But there is no way to tell whether Saddam's special envoy to Iran was able to achieve all these objectives or not. The Iraqi regime's repeated breaches of contract with Iran and its expansionist

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ideology can thwart all the political efforts of the special envoys of the Baghdad rulers; and naturally our politicians too should display the utmost caution in their approach and be skeptical about the promises that are made. However, political contacts and relations among countries is not a phenomenon that can be overshadowed by a bitter history or wrong behaviors of countries. Instead, current conditions should be assessed on the basis of what the future holds and where national interests lie, by examining incidents and studying the establishment of new political relations. Political closeness or distance from Iraq should naturally be assessed within this framework as well. [passage omitted]

In answer to the basic question of who is competent to rule Iraq after Saddam's Government, it should be said that all political facts and conclusions drawn by the powers that are involved in the region show that any change which brings to power genuinely revolutionary, Islamic, or Shiite groups will not be tolerated by America and its allies. Friend and foe alike admit that under the current conditions, there is no alternative—at least at present— for Saddam and the Ba'thist regime, and this is a reality which even the forces opposing the Iraqi regime have realized and are displaying in their behavior.

Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party are now haggling with the British and the Americans over a solution of their differences and are prepared for a possible change in the Iraqi regime!

Which Iraqi popular and Islamic group in Iraq, including the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, have emphasized that they are strong enough to lead Iraq after Saddam and to be in front of the non-religious armed and political groups in Iraq's political future?

At a time when it seems that all the powers involved in the Persian Gulf war have reached the decisive and serious decision that the Ba'thist regime's downfall is inevitable and definite, and have embarked on persistent efforts to create favorable conditions and find and form forces to succeed Saddam—forces which, in their opinion, should definitely be found from inside the Ba'thist regime and include Saddam's major opponents—the adoption of a clear strategy has become vitally important.

The threat against Iraq's sovereignty is serious, and the indecisiveness and impotence of Iraq's opposition forces is also obvious to America. Therefore, a short-term political development is impossible because of the absence of an alternative; and undoubtedly the efforts by America and its friends (its allies) will concentrate on how to prevent a rapprochement between Iran and Iraq.

In analyzing the political, ethnic, and religious groups in Iraq, two issues are of special importance. The one is the issue of the Shiites and the Sunnis, and the other is the issue of the Arabs. Naturally all these forces can be mobilized under the all-embracing and common banner of Islam in the long run. But have the leaders of such a movement emerged in Iraq?

And more important, can the most optimistic of analysts feel the presence of a leader among the current ethnic, national, Islamic, and Shiite groups and anticipate that all of these forces will unite to form the rule in Mesopotamia?

Which political strategist and speculator has said or foreseen that once Saddam's regime falls a better or more suitable entity will come to power in Iraq and will adopt a more friendly, wiser stand on Iran in comparison to the current Iraqi regime?

The theory that the Ba'thist regime led by Saddam should not be allowed to strengthened so it will not be enticed to expansionism and thoughts of conquering other countries should not be considered to be synonymous with the theory that the Iraqi regime should undoubtedly be weakened. What difference will this have on the American outlook, which believes that it is the same for America if Saddam is in or not. [passage omitted]

Should we anticipate a miracle in Iraq's future developments and put the fate of the Iraqi people, which is inevitably linked with the fate of the ruling government, in the hands of unexpected events that stem from games being played by those running affairs in the region? Apparently the adoption of an active stand in this regard will help us to avoid falling in line with events that have been engineered by others. Of course, it is correct to differentiate between the interests of the Iraqi people and the interests of the Iraqi regime. But have the majority of the Iraqi people shown that it prefers this? We do not know at what time the Iraqi people have chosen to determine their fate and the fate of their country. But there is no doubt in the fact that at present the regime ruling Iraq is the spokesman for and the defender of what remains of Iraq's national rights.

They say that a leopard does not change its spots. But here, we are not speaking about a leopard. We are speaking about an animal which is much more dangerous than a leopard. And it is not clear which animal will show more prowess and move more quickly to replace the other.

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Therefore, the dangerous and critical nature of the economic and political situation ruling Iraq should not prevent the adoption of serious and expediant policy in this field; and the complication of the situation and the overt and covert international pressures should not result in condescension to the other players on the scene.

All these reminds us of a British anecdote. A British major, who was in charge of dispatching a relief caravan to Amir Faysal's forces during World War I, told an Arab officer who was trying to avoid sending a caravan of camels on the pretext that the situation was too dangerous: "You are right. Amir Faysal is right. I am right, and the camels are right. Nevertheless, the camels must go!" And finally, the Iranian Government is right, the Iranian people are right, the Iraqi people are right, and the region is right. Nevertheless, isn't it better for the camels to go?

Paper Answers Caller's Question on Militant Clerics

NC2410073495 Tehran SALAM in Persian 17 Oct 95 p 2

["Special Answer to a Telephone Call" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified caller] Since most of the people want the Militant Clerics Association [MCA] to participate in the [upcoming Majles] elections, I propose that the members of this association fulfill the people's wish and, despite problems, participate in the elections on a conditional basis. In other words, on the condition that if one of the MCA's candidates is rejected, the others will resign.

[SALAM] We believe that this is not a logical condition to put forth either by the MCA or anyone else. Naturally this association cannot claim that all its supporters meet all the conditions for becoming a Majles deputy; and they, like everybody else, should follow the law. During the fourth term elections, even though the credentials of about 80 pro-leftist people were rejected, despite the poisonous atmosphere that was created, and being aware of the fact that the outcome of the elections would be completely negative and unfavorable, the MCA candidates stayed on until the last phase of the elections as a sign of respect for the esteemed leader's advice. This may be a good opportunity to refer to some of the incidents at that time.

During the fourth term elections, the credentials of only 40 deputies of the third term were rejected. Most of these people belonged to the leftist faction. The credentials of almost an equal number of candidates who belonged to the same faction were also rejected. Among them were people who, after the victory of the revolution, held important positions in war and non-war affairs and had been active for years in ministry posts. His Eminence the Imam had vouched for what these people were worth to the system and he also clarified that some were trying to remove and replace these useful people. Nevertheless, the credentials of about 80 members of the leftist faction were rejected, and the atmosphere of the elections was poisoned against this faction.

But they did not stop there, and on the day of the elections, posters were pasted on walls with a picture of the esteemed leader under which "Do not vote for the mischievous" was written. The radio and television also interspersed its programs with a recorded voice of the esteemed leader uttering these words. But no one asked: If, by these words, the esteemed leader was referring to people who are among the candidates, what had the Council of Guardians—with its long list of authorities—done? And if the Council of Guardians had done its job correctly [of rejecting credentials] long before the esteemed leader made his statement, then what was the meaning behind putting up such posters on the day of the elections—and that, by an official organization?! [passage omitted]

Those who have taken pen in hand to write against this faction in certain bulletins and publications can, if they want, reopen the file of the fourth term elections so that what was said in those days will come to light. We are ready—but on the condition that what is said and written is the truth, and on the condition that they do not resort to violence when they see that they are in a tight spot. We do not want to take part in such a duel because the most bitter outcome of the fourth term elections was that a large part of society got the impression that the two clerical associations were fighting against each other to see who would win and come to power and were not working for the sake of the interests of Islam and the system. But if one day we have to enter such a duel, it will not be for the sake of having our comrades elected to Majles. Those who have made the Majles what it is today may continue to enjoy their seats. No. We have no such wish or intention. The only reason why we will do this will be to register truths in history to make the search, research, and judgment easier for all those who are supporters of the Imam.

Achievements at Beijing Women's Conference Viewed

LD2310220995 Tehran IRNA in English 2140 GMT 23 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Oct. 23, IRNA — The positive impact that the Iranian delegation made at the 4th world forum of women non-governmental organizations at Beijing last month, "showed the world

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that the hijab is not an obstacle for activities but on the contrary it can accelerate the development process."

This is how presidential advisor for women's affairs, Mrs. Shahla Habibi, who led the Iranian delegation to Beijing, summed up the achievements of the Islamic Republic at the 15-day meet which attracted 30,000 women from all around the world.

In an interview which appeared in the English-language daily KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL here on Monday, Habibi said: "We couldn't have done a better job ... We did our best at Beijing to present a new culture based on the achievements of the Islamic revolution in the best possible way."

Saying that by offering logical arguments, as at Beijing, Iran can introduce Islamic culture to the world, she proudly remarked: "Our culture could open a new door for women worldwide."

Habibi noted that the sight of Iranian women at the conference moving about their work in the full freedom of the hijab, was a pleasant surprise for the mass media, and helped dispel many of the doubts created by ignorant minds.

She said Iranian women journalists did an excellent job, earning accolades from the press, and besides, there was team of about 50 Iranian women doing a good public relations job by distributing printed materials to the pariticpants in various languages and forging links with representatives from other countries.

Among achievements of the Iranian delegation, Habibi said that the draft of common goals and objectives among world religions, as introduced by the Iranians "was a welcome move which made the representatives of the European Union thank us for the initiative."

Iranians also commemorated the birth anniversary of the Virgin Mary (peace on her) at the conference, and issued a special set of commemorative stamps in honour of the noble mother of Prophet Jesus (peace on him), which Habibi said, moved Christians and other believers.

The Lady Mary is held in high esteem by Islam, and the holy qur'an which Muslims regard as the final revelation of Almighty God, has chapter titled "Marium" (chapter 19) in her honour and the virgin birth of Jesus.

Mrs. Habibi noted that many of the women delegates from other countries were inclined towards ethical and spiritual issues despite the stand to the contrary of their respective governments.

Asked by KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL on the objection raised by Iran to the drafting of the final resolution, she said Iran's vocal demand in the final voting did much to remove several offending words and clauses which were against the dignity of women.

She said the West was trying to exploit what it calls "sexual rights", but "fortunately, the others protested strongly which proved that moral values are still alive and cherished."

The West also tried to undermine the role of families, of children, of parents and the traditional role of women, but "fortunately, it failed and in the final document, the dual role of women in administrative and home grounds has been mentioned."

Habibi said that writing laws can never solve problems and the "most important thing is the conformity of these laws with the culture of the society."

Beijing was a good experience although it cannot solve women's affairs, she said, adding with confidence: "We will try to establish the necessary infrastructure to this end."

The fourth international women's conference was held September 1- 15 in the Chinese capital.

Pakistan

Islamabad To Buy French Jets; India Criticizes U.S.

BK2610123695 Hong Kong AFP in English 1213 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD, Oct 26 (AFP) — Pakistan confirmed Thursday [26 October] it would buy Mirage warplanes from France just hours after India reacted angrily to a decision by a US congress panel to ease military sanctions against its neighbour.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Asif Ahmad Ali confirmed that Pakistan and France had reached agreement in principle on the sale of French Mirage 2000 fighters to the Pakistan air force.

Ahmed Ali told the official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency that approval was given by the French government while Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was in Paris this week.

Bhutto said after meeting President Jacques Chirac on Wednesday that the French leader had approved the sale of 40 Mirages to Pakistan. But she added that there were more talks to be completed. Chirac's office did not confirm the declaration.

The two countries have been in discussion on the sale for many years, though the Pakistan air force had recently indicated it would buy only 32 fighters.

India has reacted angrily to a US congressional panel decision to ease military and economic sanctions on

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Pakistan, saying it would lead to an arms race in the region.

In Calcutta, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee dubbed the US move as a condonation of Islamabad's nuclear weapons programme, but said it would not hurt Indo-US ties.

Mukherjee said in a statement that New Delhi was disappointed "that our serious concerns and strong reaction of Indian political and public opinion have not been taken into account."

He said the US panel's decision would lead to "an unintended arms race in the subcontinent as India will have to meet the threat from Pakistan's enhanced military capabilities."

The Indian opposition was even more outspoken in attacking the United States.

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) dubbed the decision "unfortunate," pressed New Delhi to lodge a formal protest, and said it would trigger an arms race in South Asia.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) urged the government to snap all military ties with the United States.

New Delhi has been seeking to develop ties with Washington since the collapse of its ally the Soviet Union. But the United States' continued defence cooperation with Pakistan is an irritant.

The US House and Senate conference committee Tuesday approved legislation that modifies a law banning economic and military aid to Pakistan, India's arch foe, until Islamabad certifies that it does not possess nuclear weapons.

The committee will send the measure — attached to a large foreign aid bill — back to both chambers for a final vote before it goes to US President Bill Clinton, who s@pports the provision.

It would allow the United States to deliver 368 million dollars in military equipment that Pakistan bought in 1990 as well as the resumption of aid, loans, and risk insurance.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947, including two over the picturesque Himalayan region of Kashmir whose ownership is disputed by the two neighbours.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Muslim militants in Kashmir and Sikh separatists in the neighbouring state of Punjab. Islamabad denies this but gives open diplomatic support to the Kashmir unrest.

Both India and Pakistan are believed to possess nuclear weapons.

Bhutto on Chirac Meeting, Brown Amendment

BK2510145995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had very successful talks with President Chirac on bilateral cooperation in economic, commercial, and defense fields. Prime Minister Bhutto, who arrived in Paris this morning on a day's visit, held about one-hour talks with the French president. In the talks, Ms. Benazir Bhutto was assisted by the special assistant to prime minister, Mr. Shahid Hassan, and the foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh.

The prime minister said France has been a good friend of Pakistan and has been assisting it in various fields. She said they have, therefore, discussed how the two countries could increase economic cooperation. The two sides particularly discussed French investment in coal, power, thermal plants and power distribution projects, as well as the purchase of planes.

The prime minister also discussed matters relating to defense cooperation. The prime minister told newsmen that Pakistan had acquired submarines from France and discussions to get Mirage fighter planes from France were also continuing. The prime minister said that during the talks international issues also came under discussion. She said Pakistan is appreciative of French role in third world causes, including matters relating to Muslim countries, particularly Bosnia. The prime minister said that she had invited President Chirac to visit Pakistan and he has accepted the invitation.

Regarding the passage of Brown Amendment, Prime Minister said that it was a political factor for Pakistan. Pakistan's just stand on the matter has been vindicated. It demonstrated fair approach that the U.S. President and the U.S. Congress had adopted toward Pakistan. The prime minister said that Pakistan was thankful to the American nation, U.S. President, U.S. Congress, and Senator Brown for spearheading move to get the unfair Pressler law changed.

Earlier, when Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto arrived at the Elysees Palace, Republican Guards presented the salute. President Chirac himself came to the gate to greet the prime minister. The two leaders then went to the president's office and continued their talks for full 55 minutes, which were earlier scheduled for half an hour. The prime minister is meeting the French prime minister in the evening.

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Bhutto Cooperation Talks in France Reported

BK2610140795 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is back home after her visit to Colombia, United States, and France, which brought many successes to Pakistan. Prime Minister forcefully projected Kashmir at NAM [Nonaligned Movement] summit and during her address to the General Assembly. Her visit to the United States was crowned with another success and that was the passage of Brown Amendment. The U.S. Administration recognized Pakistan's point of view and agreed to release defense equipment and lift host of sanctions imposed under Pressler Law.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's brief stay in Paris paved the way to get Mirage jets from France, which will strengthen the country's defense. The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, told the newsmen at Islamabad Airport this morning that it appeared that the French Government has agreed in principle to meet Pakistan's defense needs and now there is no hurdle in this way.

In Paris, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had a meeting with the French prime minister, Mr. Alain Juppe. Cooperation between Pakistan and France in the economic, trade, and defense fields figured prominently during the talks. France is cooperating with Pakistan in defense sector.

PTV correspondent Ziauddin Butt reports that Pakistan is also seeking French cooperation in the energy sector. Pakistan has already initialed an agreement with France for the purchase of submarines. Some senior members of the prime minister's entourage also attended the meeting.

Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh has described Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to Colombia, New York, London, and Paris as highly successful from a number of aspects. He said besides attending NAM summit and UN celebrations, this tour provided opportunity to meet 45 heads of state and government, including President Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin.

[Begin Sheikh recording] At these meetings, she was able to put across Pakistan's principled foreign policy objectives, namely support for the cause of the Kashmiri people and the realization of their right of self-determination, and to affirm the ties of friendship that Pakistan enjoys with the countries whose leaders she met. The success of her meetings can be gauged from the fact that one more than one occasion, groups of heads of state and government indicated a heightened awareness and an enhanced concern about the denial of the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the threat to peace and stability in the region that was created by the continuance of this dispute. [end recording]

In reply to a question, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh said the United States has particularly dismissed the Indian propaganda over the passage of Brown Amendment that it will affect the military balance in the region.

To another question, he said since the French president has given political clearance to the sale of Mirage 2000-5 to Pakistan, price and other details of the proposed deal would now be worked out.

Official Comments on Mirage Purchase, Bhutto's Visit

BK2610162195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] France has given political clearance for the sale of Mirage 2000-5 aircraft to Pakistan and responded positively to the proposal of providing credit facilities for the purchase of these aircraft. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh said that during their talks with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Paris yesterday, both French President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppe, told Bhutto that they have agreed to the sale of the aircraft. He said there was a clear and positive response on the financial package that would be worked out after the completion of technical discussions. He pointed out that so far no decision has been made as to how many aircraft would be purchased or when the first aircraft would be delivered to Pakistan.

About the Brown Amendment, the foreign secretary said that it was adopted in the face of an intense Indian campaign to block the move. He pointed out that the U.S. Administration has come to the conclusion that there is no rationale for Indian protests or claims that this supply of limited quantity of military equipment would affect the military balance in the region.

Najmuddin Sheikh said France has showed interest in investing in Pakistan in the fields of thermal power generation, construction and management of high-speed railways, and the setting up of distribution and management facilities for electricity and water. He said President Chirac emphasized that France attaches special importance to its relations with Pakistan.

About Benazir Bhutto's address to the special session of the United Nations, the foreign secretary said that delegates from a number of countries welcomed and supported the prime minister's proposals and that Pakistan would now be taking follow-up action on them.

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He said during her meetings with the heads of state and government in both Colombia and New York, the prime minister informed them of the major objectives of Pakistan's foreign policy, including the Kashmir cause and the importance of, and the need for, the realization of the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people. The heads of state and government said they are fully aware of the fact that the Kashmiri people are being denied their right of self-determination.

The foreign secretary said that the prime minister also had a meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, during which the Russian leader expressed his desire for developing beneficial relations with Pakistan. He said the prime minister's visit to Russia next year is an important and essential element for improving these relations.

Najmuddin Sheikh said the prime minister also met Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, the chairman of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, in New York, during which the Kashmiri leader expressed gratitude for the support Pakistan has extended to the Kashmiri people. Omar Farooq also told the prime minister that the successful projection of the Kashmir issue by Pakistan over the last two years has heightened international awareness of this dispute.

Ali Terms Brown Amendment Passage 'Major Breakthrough'

BK2610150595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has said the adoption of the Brown Amendment is a vindication of Pakistan's honor and principled position on its peaceful nuclear program.

Talking to newsmen at the Islamabad Airport this morning, he described the approval of the Brown Amendment by the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives Committee as a major breakthrough and said it would further improve relations between the two countries. He pointed out on the one hand, Pakistan has not compromised on its peaceful nuclear program and, on the other, it was able to bring a change in the Pressler law. He described it as a major success of Pakistan's foreign policy. The foreign minister said the prime minister fully highlighted the Kashmir issue at the UN special session and at the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] summit.

Asked about the forthcoming visit of the prime minister to Iran, the foreign minister said she will hold talks with the Iranian leaders on bilateral relations and the situation in Afghanistan and Kashmir. He emphasized that the two countries have very fraternal and brotherly relations.

Federal Ministers Welcome Passage of Brown Amendment

BK2710061395 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal, federal minister for information and broadcasting, has said the passage of the Brown amendment will restore normal relations between Pakistan and the United States. In an interview with the SAUDI GAZETTE, he said the passage of the Brown amendment is a great moral victory for both countries.

Answering a question about the arms race in the region, the federal minister said India has already started manufacturing long- and short-range missiles that are capable of carrying nuclear and biological warheads. This is very dangerous for Pakistan because the whole country is within the range of these missiles.

Federal Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani has also hailed the passage of the Brown amendment and described it as a political victory for Pakistan. He said in a statement in Islamabad that Pakistan has been able to achieve this objective, which was once considered impossible, due to the relentless efforts and sagacity of the prime minister.

Sri Lanka

Minister Says Country Placed on 'War Footing'

BK2610113495 Hong Kong AFP in English 1121 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Oct 26 (AFP) — Sri Lanka is being placed on a "war footing" to tackle escalating ethnic violence, a senior Sri Lankan minister announced Thursday [26 October], amid reports of another civilian massacre at the hands of Tamil rebels.

Industries Minister Clement Gooneratne told parliament the cabinet had approved his proposal to place the entire country on what he called a war footing.

Government spokesman Dharmasiri Senanayake confirmed that the proposal was taken up in cabinet and said the modalities were being worked out and would be announced after the imminent return of President Chandrika Kumaratunga from New York.

"A proposal moved by me to place the country on a war footing was approved by cabinet last night. A subcommittee to do the job has been set up," Gooneratne said during a debate on the current security situation.

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The implications of the move were not immediately spelt out, but officials said it could mean the entire country being placed under a state of emergency and the arming of civilians against rebel attacks.

The decision was announced as the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were accused of carrying out another massacre of ethnic Sinhalese in the north central Anuradhapura region on Thursday.

Photographers flown to the area said that 24 people, including a mother and her seven-day old infant, had been hacked to death by the attackers who raided two remote hamlets in the region.

Military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said earlier that 40 people had been killed but an AFP photographer in the area said a final tally showed that a total of 40 people had been attacked and of those 24 had died.

The latest massacre was the fifth in as many days, bringing the death toll among unarmed civilians to 116.

According to the military, the massacres are designed to divert the attention of security forces conducting a major offensive against the LTTE in the island's northern Jaffna peninsula.

Colombo To Arm Villagers Against Tamil Rebel Attacks

BK2610115395 Hong Kong AFP in English 1140 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Oct 26 (AFP) — The Sri Lankan military said on Thursday [26 October] it would arm villagers to protect them against attacks by Tamil guerrillas that have claimed 116 lives in five days, military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe told reporters.

The military's decision to arm civilians follows the massacre of 24 Sinhalese peasants in north-central Sri Lanka by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) gunmen on Thursday, raising to 116 the number of villagers killed since Saturday.

"There is no question of re-deploying troops in the north to protect villages. So we need the support of the civilians themselves to protect the villages," Munasinghe said.

He said thousands of security forces deployed in the island's northern Jaffna peninsula for an ongoing major offensive against the LTTE will not be withdrawn to the rest of the country.

"My appeal to you is to please help us in this campaign in the north by cooperating with your local police and the Civil Defence Force units to look after your own areas and stay calm," Munasinghe said.

The military has accused the Tigers of carrying out civilian massacre to force the government to move troops from the Jaffna peninsula to remote villages elsewhere in the country.

The LTTE is fighting for a separate state in the northern and eastern regions for Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community.

Tamil Rebel Chief Reportedly Leaves Jaffna War Zone

BK2610132695 Hong Kong AFP in English 1313 GMT 26 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Oct 26 (AFP) — The Tamil Tiger guerrilla supremo has left his northern Jaffna peninsula stronghold in the wake of a major military onslaught, aid officials and the military said Thursday [26 October].

Velupillai Prabhakaran, head of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), has moved out of the Jaffna peninsula and gone to the northern mainland, military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said.

He said the Tiger leader had left the peninsula fearing the military advance [words indistinct] northern town of Jaffna which the rebels have vowed to defend to their last man.

Aid officials in the region confirmed that Prabhakaran had not been seen or heard in the Jaffna peninsula in recent weeks and residents believed he had moved away to the mainland.

Earlier in the week, the government here said it was considering India's request for the extradition of Prabhakaran to answer charges of slaying India's former premier Rajiv Gandhi.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga discussed the issue with Indian Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao during a bilateral meeting in New York, the government said.

India has asked for Prabhakaran, who is leading a campaign for a separate state and has been cited as the main suspect in the assassination of Gandhi in May 1991.

President Sets Conditions for Talks With LTTE

BK2710070595 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 27 Oct 95 p 6

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York (Thursday) — Addressing a breakfast meeting at the Asia Society of New York, President Chandrika Kumaratunga said the

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Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has dragged her into a war "which we don't want."

"We are obliged to wage war and are trying to prevent the Tigers getting us individually," she added.

Just before she left for New York, she said she received a copy of a petition sent to the LTTE in which 10,000 mothers in the North were urging "a political solution and an end to the war."

She said the grieving mothers were protesting the fact that their eleven and twelve year old children were being forcibly conscripted by the LTTE as sacrificial lambs in a ruthless war.

The President said she still believes in a political solution, not a military solution, to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka.

Asked what it would take to re-start negotiations, she said she will lay down three conditions before any resumption of future talks.

First, a complete cessation of hostilities. Second, at least a symbolic laying down of arms, and third, an agreement to sit down and negotiate within a specific time frame.

"One year ago, we were foolish not to lay down conditions," she said but now there will be no talks without conditions.

The president said that during eight months of dialogue, the LTTE never once agreed even to set dates for discussion.

"I don't think there is any government in the world that conceded so much to an armed group," she added.

She dismissed as "rubbish" the argument that her representatives to the peace talks with the LTTE were not professional negotiators "who had her ear."

She said she does not need the services of international "conflict resolution specialists" because "I can't find any better conflict resolution specialists than Sri Lankans themselves."

Even the Irish Republican Army (IRA) symbolically laid down arms before starting negotiations with the British, she added.

President Kumaratunga also gave an assurance she would abolish the executive presidency as pledged during the last elections.

She said she intends to change the constitution along with amendments for the resolution of the ethnic crisis.

"We will go down in history as one of the few governments that had the pleasure of doing away with its own powers. But we don't mind it," she said

Describing the executive presidency as "a strange institution," she said she has not used any of the authoritarian powers vested in her as president.

The meeting, presided over by Asia Society President Nicholas Platt, was attended by a group of about 140 academics, financiers, investment bankers, journalists, diplomats and Sri Lankan expatriates.

Among those present at the meeting was former US Ambassador to Sri Lanka Teresita Schaffer, currently at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute.

The president was accompanied by Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador H.L. de Silva and Deputy Permanent Representative Ambassador Nihal Rodrigo.

Tamil Group Threatens Foreign Investors, Tourists

BK2710082995 Hong Kong AFP in English
0759 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Oct 27 (AFP)— A shadowy Tamil group has renewed a threat against foreign investors and tourists visiting Sri Lanka and said the bombing of oil storage tanks in the capital was warning.

The Ellalan Force, known as a front for the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), said revenue from investments and tourism was used by the government to fund its war against the Tamil separatists.

"So we decided to carry out attacks on all foreign investments and tourists," said the one-page type-written Ellalan Force letter received in the post by AFP Friday [27 October].

The group had claimed responsibility for a spate of minor bomb blasts at four hotels in and around the capital last year. Only a man who carried a bomb with him died in those attacks.

The group also claimed an abortive car bomb attack against the Colombo International airport in June.

Army Lines Close to Neerveli; Rebel Radio Not on Air

BK2710093095 Hong Kong AFP in English
0915 GMT 27 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Oct 27 (AFP) — The clandestine radio station of Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerrillas has been off the air for nearly six days and may have been hit during a military offensive, Tamil sources said Friday [27 October].

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The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have not transmitted their regular twice daily news bulletins since the start of the week when the army escalated their campaign against the rebels, the sources said.

The Voice of Tigers radio was believed to have operated from the small town of Neerveli in the northern peninsula of Jaffna where there had been intense artillery exchanges and air force attacks.

During another military campaign in Jaffna in July, the Voice of Tigers went off the air for a few days.

Military officials here said they could not immediately confirm if the Voice of Tigers station had been hit in the offensive which aims to capture the rebel stronghold of Jaffna town.

However, military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said army defence lines had moved almost up to Neerveli.

The military says it lost 126 soldiers in the latest offensive and claim to have killed more than 500 rebels. The Tamil Tigers are leading a protracted campaign for independence in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

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